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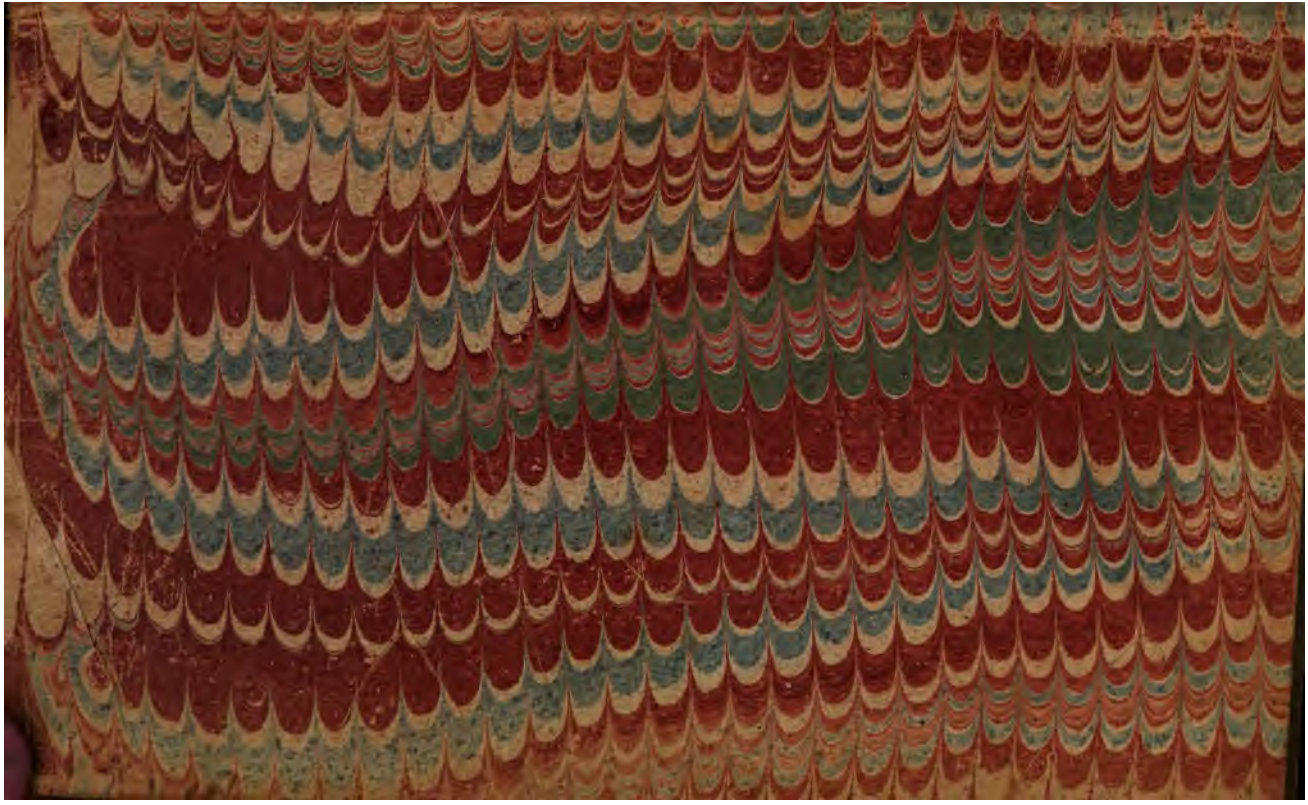

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THERON and ASPASIO:

OR, A

SERIES

OF

DIALOGUES

AND

LETTERS,

UPON THE

Most *Important* and *Interesting* SUBJECTS.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

BY JAMES HERVEY, A. M.
Late Rector of *Weston-Favell*, in *Northamptonshire*.

My Mouth shall daily speak of thy Righteousness *and* Salvation; *for I know no End thereof.* Psal. lxxi. 13.

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A

SERIES

OF

DIALOGUES.

DIALOGUE IX.

THERON, impreſſed with the laſt Converſation, was very deſirous to reſume the Subject, and renew the important Debate. With this View, He conducted his Friend into a Retirement, commodious for the Purpoſe.

They enter a ſpacious *Lawn*; which lay oppoſite to the Houſe, and opened itſelf in the Form of an expanded Fan. The Mounds, on either Side, were dreſſed in Verdure; and ran out in a ſlanting Direction. The whole, to an Eye placed at a Diſtance, bore the Reſemblance of a magnificent *Viſta*; contracting, by ſlow Degrees, its Dimenſions; and leſſening, at laſt, into a Point. Which, the regular

and graceful Seat, with all imaginable Dignity, ſupplied.

Nature had ſunk the Lawn into a gentle *Decline*. On whoſe ample Sides, were Oxen browzing, and Lambs friſking. The luſty Droves lowed, as they paſſed; and the thriving Flocks, bleated welcome Muſic in their Maſter's Ear.—Along the Midſt of this verdant Slope, was ſtretched a ſpacious and extenſive *Walk*. Which, coated with Gravel, and fenced with Palliſadoes, looked like a plain Stripe of Brown, interſecting a Carpet of the brighteſt Green.—At the Bottom, two handſome *Canals*, copiouſly ſtocked with Fiſh, ſometimes floated to the Breeze; ſometimes ſtood unmoved "pure as "the Expanſe of Heaven." The Waters, beheld from every Room in the Houſe, had a fine Effect upon the Sight; not without a refreſhing Influence on the Imagination.—At the Extremity of one, was planted a ſtately *Colonade*. The Roof, elevated on Pillars of the *Ionic* Order; the Area ſlabbed with Stones, neatly ranged in the Diamond-faſhion. Several Foreſt-chairs accommodated the Anglers with a Seat, while the bending Dome ſupplied them with a Shade.

Correſponding, and on the Margin of the other Canal, was erected a *Summer-houſe*, of a very ſingular Kind.—The lower Part had an Opening towards the North; it was cool; it was gloomy; and had never ſeen the Sun. It carried the romantic Air of a *Grotto*, or rather the penſive Appearance of a *Hermit's Cell*. The Outſide was coarſe and rugged with protuberant Stones. Partly over-ſpread with Ivy, partly covered with Moſs, it ſeemed to be the Work of antient Years. You deſcend, by Steps

of Turf; and are obliged to ſtoop as you paſs the Door. A ſcanty Iron Grate, with certain narrow Slits in the Wall, tranſmit a glimmering Light; juſt ſufficient to diſcover the inner Structure. Which appears, like one continued Piece of Rock-work; a Cavern cut from the ſurrounding Quarry. —*Above*, hung an irregular Arch; with an Aſpect, that ſeemed to preſage a Fall, and more than ſeemed to alarm the Stranger. *Below*, lay a Paving of homely Pebbles; in ſome Places, a little furrowed; as though it had been worn, by the frequent Tread of ſolitary Feet. *All around*, were Ruſticity and Solemnity; Solemnity, never more viſibly ſeen, than through a Gloom.—The Furniture, of the ſame *groteſque* Faſhion, with the Apartment. A Bench hewed, You would ſuſpect, by Nature's Chizzel, out of the ſolid Stone. A Sort of Couch, compoſed of ſwelling Moſs, and ſmall fibrous Roots.—From one Corner, trickled a pure Spring: which crept, with a bubbling Moan, along the channeled Floor; till its Current was collected into a Baſon, rudely ſcooped from the Ground. On the Edge of this little Receptacle, lay chained a ruſty Bowl; and over it, ſtood an antique worm-eaten Table.—On the leaſt obſcure Part of the Wall, you diſcern, *dimly* diſcern, a Parchment Scroll; inſcribed with that ſage, but mortifying Admonition; VANITY OF VANITIES! ALL IS VANITY!

Over this Receſs, ſo pleaſingly horrid, and adapted to ſolemn Muſings, aroſe an open and airy *Belvidere*. You aſcend by winding Stairs; and, coming from the *uncouth* Abode below, are ſweetly ſurpriſed with an *elegant* Hexagon.—The Cieling lofty, and decorated with the ſofteſt, richeſt, almoſt flowing

Fret-work. The Wainſcot, in large Pannels of Oak, retained its native Auburn: ſo beautifully plain, that, like an amiable Countenance, it would have been disfigured, rather than improved, by the moſt coſtly Paint. On this were diſpoſed, in gilded Frames, and to great Advantage, a Variety of entertaining *Landſcapes*. But none ſurpaſſed, none equaled, all were a Foil to, the noble lovely Views, which the Windows commanded.—The Chimney-piece, of white ſhining Marble, ſtreaked with Veins of vivid Red. Over it, was carved a fine Feſtoon of artificial, in it, was ranged a choice Collection of natural Flowers.—On a Table of gloſſy Walnut, lay a portable Teleſcope; attended with *Thomſon's Seaſons*, and *Vanierii Prædium Ruſticum* *.

The Whole was fitted up in the higheſt Taſte, and furniſhed with every pleaſurable Ornament. On purpoſe to harmonize with that *laviſh Gaiety*, which ſeemed to ſmile over all the Face of Nature. On purpoſe to correſpond with that *vernal Delight*, which came breathing on the Wings of every fragrant Gale. I may add, on purpoſe to remind the Beholder of thoſe *immortal Manſions*, which are decorated with Images infinitely more ſplendid, with Objects unſpeakably more glorious. Where holy Beings will ſpend,

* *Vanierii Prædium Ruſticum*——A moſt elegant *Latin Poem:* which treats of every remarkable Peculiarity, relating to the Buſineſs of a Country Life, or the Furniture of a Country Seat.——It entertains us with a Deſcription of the moſt *agreeable* Objects; in an eaſy Flow, of the *pureſt* Language, and moſt *muſical* Numbers.

It is, I think, one continued Beauty. Superior to every Thing of the Kind, I have met with among the Moderns; and ſcarcely, if at all, unworthy the firſt Genius of the *Auguſtan* Age. *Uni Virgilio ſecundus, & pene par.*

ſpend, not a few vacant Hours in refined Amuſement, but a boundleſs Eternity in the Conſummation of Joy.—For, to a well-turned Mind, Nature is a Preceptor; and theſe are her inſtructive Leſſons. To the pure in Heart, even Senſe is edifying; and theſe are its delicate Moralities.

The redundant Waters of the Canal, rolled off in a ſpreading *Caſcade*. Which, tumbling from many a little Precipice, ſoothed the Air with a Symphony of ſoft and gurgling Sounds. Nor ever intermitted the obliging Office,

From Morn to Noon, from Noon to dewy Eve.

But, when the fanning Breezes dropt their Wings; when the feathered Choir were huſhed in Sleep; when not ſo much as a chirping Graſhopper, was heard throughout the Meads; this liquid Inſtrument ſtill played its *Solo:* ſtill purſued its buſy Way, and warbled, as it flowed, melodious Murmurs.

Aſp. Such, *Theron*; ſo uniform, uninterrupted, and invariable, ſhould be our Conformity to the Precepts of the Law.—But alas! thoſe ſacred Precepts are ſo *exceedingly broad*, that the moſt enlarged human Obedience, is far from being commenſurate to their Extent: ſo *abſolutely holy*, that our higheſt Attainments fall vaſtly ſhort of their exalted Perfection.—How then can We expect Juſtification, from ſuch a conſummate Rule? How dare We place any Dependence, upon ſuch imperfect Duties?

When You was pleading for ſuch a Method of Juſtification, You put me in Mind of the Conſul *Mummius*. I could not but think of thoſe memorable Orders, which He gave the Merchant, who

undertook to convey his fine *Grecian* Statues to *Rome*.

Ther. Inſtead of the Conſul, You ſhould have ſaid the Clown *Mummius*. No Clown ever diſcovered a more groſs and indelicate Taſte, than that illuſtrious Booby. For any One to talk of making new *Antiques**, was Folly and Nonſenſe to the laſt Degree. But is it equally abſurd, for Us to talk of regaining and ſecuring the Favour of GOD, by our Repentance, our Reformation, our holy Duties?

Aſp.

* *Mummius* was General of the *Roman* Army; and, on Account of his ſignal Victories in *Achaia*, ſurnamed *Achaicus*. Though a ſucceſsful Warrior, He was no very acute Connoiſſeur. Of this, the Story to which *Aſpaſio* refers, is a pretty evident Proof.—Having conquered and plundered the City of *Corinth*, there was found, among the Spoils, a moſt curious Collection of Pictures and Statues; wrought by the ableſt Hands, and greateſt Maſters, that *Greece* itſelf had produced. What ſhall He do with theſe incomparable Remains of Antiquity? He reſolves, forſooth, upon tranſmitting them to *Rome*; that they may *make a Shew*, on the Day of his Triumph. As Water-carriage was moſt convenient, He agrees with the Captain of a Veſſel; charges Him to take particular Care of the Freight; and adds, very ſeriouſly adds; That *in Caſe they were loſt in their Paſſage, He would oblige Him to provide new ones.* A Saying, deſervedly ridiculed by all Men of Senſe, as a moſt egregious Soleciſm in Taſte and Delicacy.

Demens! qui Nimbos & non imitabile Fulmen
Ære & cornipedum Curſu ſimulâret Equorum.

VIRG.

If this Reprehenſion of the Poet's, is applicable to *Mummius*, and his ill-judged Menace; how much more juſtly may it be applied to *Theron*, and his ſelf-juſtifying Sentiments.

Asp. I see very little odds in the Case, truly. Because, the Means, which You would use, are impracticable; and the End, at which You aim, is unattainable; unless

——————————*One greater Man*
Restore Us, and regain the blissful Seat.

Milton, You observe, had no Notion of Man's restoring Himself; or *regaining* the Favour of GOD, by his own Reformation. Such an Attempt, according to his Way of thinking, were somewhat like the Conceit of making *new Antiques*.—What Hand could give Us *Jupiter*, in all his commanding Majesty, but the Hand of *Phidias*? What Pencil could shew Us *Venus*, in all her attractive Beauty, but the Pencil of *Apelles*? Much more may We ask; what Obedience could equal the Perfection of the divine Law, but the Obedience of *CHRIST*? Or what Expedient can reconcile Sinners to their offended GOD, but only the Blood and Righteousness of his beloved SON?

Ther. Pray, let me ask in my Turn—Because Mankind are incapable of pleasing their MAKER, by yielding an *absolute* and *invariable* Obedience to the moral Law; does it follow from thence, that they cannot render themselves acceptable to Him, by an universal Course of sincere Obedience?

Asp. I think, it follows from what has been already observed. If You desire new Arguments, they are at hand.

The Law, says the Teacher of the *Gentiles*, *is the Ministration of Death* *. How can this be true, if it

* 2 *Cor.* iii. 7. In *this* Place, I apprehend, the Apostle means the *moral* Law, and that principally. As that alone

it requires no more than a *ſincere* Obedience; ſuch as is proportioned to our infirm State? If this be ſufficient to juſtify, and intitle Us to our CREATOR's Favour; the Law ceaſes to be the Miniſtration of Condemnation. It becomes (which is flatly contradictory to the Apoſtle's Doctrine) the Miniſtration of Righteouſneſs.

The Law is ſtiled, by the ſame inſpired Teacher, *A Schoolmaſter to* bring Us to *CHRIST* †. How can it, upon your Suppoſition, be qualified for ſuch an Office? If a ſincere Obedience be the Whole of its Demands, it can no longer direct Us to *CHRIST*; it will no longer deliver Us over to a REDEEMER's Merit; but muſt engage and attach Us to *itſelf*. Teaching Us to look upon its Precepts, and our own conſcientious Obſervance of them, as the Tenure of eternal Life.

Do

alone was *written and engraven on Stones*. Elſewhere, I believe, He uſes the Word in a larger Senſe; and intends to exclude *all* Law whatever, from bearing any Share in our Juſtification.

† *Gal.* iii. 24. Παιδαγωγος, *A School-maſter*. Who pretends not to *finiſh* the Education of Youth; but directs them to, and prepares them for, higher Studies, or nobler Employs. The Law, in like Manner, aims not at furniſhing Us with a Title to eternal Happineſs; but *diſpoſes* and *diſciplines* Us, for the All-ſufficient REDEEMER, and his free Salvation.

Some have thought, that εις Χριστον ſignifies, *Until the Coming of CHRIST*. But this will hardly conſiſt with the Genius of the Language, or with the Import of the following Clauſe, *That We might be juſtified by Faith.*— Beſides, this would confine the Efficacy of the Law, to that Period of Time, which preceded our LORD's Incarnation. Whereas, it *ſtill* does, and *always* will act, (until this Corruptible ſhall put on Incorruption) in a Way of Subſerviency to his Merits.

Do You inſiſt upon a third Proof? A third preſents itſelf. Not ſo much founded on Argumentation, as deduced from Example.—How was *Abraham* **, the Friend of GOD, and Father of the Faithful, juſtified? By a Courſe of ſincere, or by many Acts of heroic Obedience? No; but by Faith in the promiſed MESSIAH. *Abraham worked not*, with a View to obtain Juſtification; *but believed on Him, who juſtifieth the Ungodly.*—How was *David* **, the Man after GOD's own Heart, juſtified? By his Zeal for his CREATOR's Glory, or by his eminent Services to his Fellow-creatures? No; but by a Righteouſneſs imputed: even that Righteouſneſs of the bleſſed REDEEMER, through which *Iniquity is forgiven, and Sin pardoned.*—And can We be ſaid to walk humbly, or can We be thought to walk ſurely, if, refuſing to tread in the Steps of theſe exemplary Saints, We divert into a Path of our own deviſing?

Ther. "Of our own deviſing!"—No, my Friend: there is a *milder* Law introduced by the Goſpel, condeſcending

** Theſe two Examples are, with the greateſt Judgment ſelected, and with the utmoſt Propriety applied. *Rom.* iv. 1, *&c. Rom.* iv. 6, *&c.—Abraham* was the moſt illuſtrious Pattern of Piety, among the *Jewiſh* Patriarchs: *In Glory there was None like Him*, Ecclus xliv. 19. *David* was the moſt zealous and ſeraphic of the *Jewiſh* Kings: *A Man after GOD's own Heart*, 1 Sam. xiii. 14.—If neither of theſe diſtinguiſhed Perſonages, was juſtified by *his own* Obedience; but each by *an imputed* Righteouſneſs: If they both obtained Acceptance with GOD, not as *upright* Beings, who might claim it; but as *ſinful* Creatures, who muſt implore it; the Conſequence is glaring. It is ſuch, as muſt ſtrike every attentive Underſtanding; muſt affect every individual Perſon; and ſeclude all Manner of Works, even thoſe of the higheſt Saint, from any the leaſt Degree of Ingrediency into Juſtification.

deſcending and merciful to our Infirmities, which accepts of Sincerity inſtead of perfect Obedience?

Aſp. When was this milder Law introduced, and the ſtricter abrogated?—Not upon the Entrance of Sin, I preſume. At this Rate, the original Law muſt be the Creature of a *few Days*, perhaps of a *few Hours* only. But can We imagine, that the All-wiſe and Unchangeable GOD would ordain a Syſtem of Precepts, to be diſannulled, as ſoon as enacted? Not in our LORD's Time, I am very certain. That holy Commandment, which requires *ſupreme* Love to GOD, and *perfect* Charity to Men, He aſſures Us, was ſtill in Force *. Nay, it is evident, from the Nature of the DEITY, and from our Relation to one another, That it always will be in Force; that it never can ceaſe; but is neceſſary and everlaſting.

" A milder Law, condeſcending to our Infirmi-
" ties"—What can be the Purport of ſuch an Inſtitution? It muſt be ſuppoſed to ſpeak the following Language; " Be it known unto You, O Children
" of *Adam*, that You are no longer enjoined to love
" the LORD with all your Strength, nor to love
" your Neighbour as Yourſelves.—*Once*, indeed, I
" inſiſted upon abſolute Purity of Heart; *now* I can
" diſpenſe with ſome Degree of evil Concupiſcence.
" —Since *CHRIST* is come, and his Goſpel
" preached, You need not always be clothed with
" Humility; but may feel ſome little Emotions of
" Pride.—In ſhort; becauſe You are *weak*, I will
" *connive*; or even accommodate my Demands to
" your enfeebled and depraved Condition."

Not

* Matt. xxii. 37, 38, 39.

Not to urge (what muſt be ſhocking to every Ear) That ſuch a Doctrine would make the HOLY ONE of GOD, a Miniſter of Sin; and the Goſpel of our Salvation, a Patent for Licentiouſneſs. Let me only aſk—Does this agree with our LORD's Declaration? *One Jot or Tittle ſhall in no wiſe paſs from the Law, till all be fulfilled* *.—Is this ſuitable to the Perfections of the Divine LEGISLATOR? *With whom is no Variableneſs, nor Shadow of Turning* †?—Will this conſiſt with the avowed Reſolution of the Almighty JEHOVAH? *He will magnify the Law, and make it honourable* ‡.

Ther. However You may decry, what I call the milder Law, St. *Paul* aſſerts it to be the *Chriſtian* Scheme. This he ſtrenuouſly argues for, as the only Scheme by which any Man can be juſtified in the Sight of GOD.

Aſp. Does He, *Theron?* In what Epiſtle? What Chapter? What Verſe?—He ſays, addreſſing Himſelf to the *Galatian* Converts; *I do not fruſtrate the Grace of GOD; for, if Righteouſneſs came by the Law, CHRIST is dead in vain* ‖. From which Paſſage, We learn two very momentous Truths. That, were we to derive a juſtifying Righteouſneſs from the Law, this would not only be *derogatory* to the Honour of Grace, but *ſubverſive* of its very Being.—That by ſeeking Juſtification through our own conſcientious Behaviour, We make, as far as in Us lies, the Death of *CHRIST* a *vain* Thing; for which there was no Occaſion, and of which there is no Uſe.

To

* Matt. v. 18. † Jam. i. 17. ‡ Iſai. xlii. 21.
‖ Gal. ii. 21.

To the ſame Purpoſe it is written in that invaluable Epiſtle to the *Romans* *; *If they which are of the Law be Heirs*; if they, who truſt to their own Performances of the Law, are thereby intitled to the heavenly Inheritance; *Faith is made void, and the Promiſe made of none Effect.*—See now, my Friend, the Tendency of your Opinion! It is not a mere ſpeculative Miſtake; an Error of inconſiderable Conſequence; but ſuch as ſtrikes at the Fundamentals of the Goſpel. Inſtead of being the only *Chriſtian* Scheme, it totally overthrows † *Chriſtianity* itſelf. For, it would render the Promiſe abortive, and ſuperſede the Neceſſity of Faith. It would deſtroy the very Exiſtence of Grace, and make even the Death of *CHRIST* a ſuperfluous Tranſaction.

Ther. This I ſee, *Aſpaſio*; That the Method of obtaining Acceptance on Account of our own Sincerity, is a benign Expedient; ſuch as correſponds with the compaſſionate Nature of the DEITY; and is, what the Apoſtle ſtiles, *being juſtified by Faith, without the Deeds of the Law.*

Aſp.

* Rom. iv. 14.

† St. *Paul* ſays of thoſe Preachers, who taught Juſtification by the Works of the Law, *They would pervert*, or (as the Original μεταστρεψαι may be tranſlated) ſubvert and overthrow *the Goſpel of CHRIST.*—To pervert, give a *wrong Turn*, or a *falſe Colour*, ſeems not to expreſs fully the Apoſtle's Idea, nor to preſerve the native Energy of his Argument. The *Greek* Word is equivalent to the *Hebrew* הפך, which we generally render *evertere.* Gal. i. 7.

It may be worth our while, to tranſcribe *Beza*'s Deſcant upon the Paſſage: which is no leſs pertinent, than it is important. *Quid enim magis contrarium eſt Fidei, ſive gratuitæ Juſtificationi, quàm Juſtificatio ex Lege, ſive Meritis, non CHRISTI ſed noſtris? Itaque quæ volunt iſta duo conciliare, magis etiam ſunt inepti, quàm ſi quis conetur Lucem cum Tenebris, Mortem cum Vitâ conjungere.*

Aſp. How! To be juſtified by Faith, and juſtified by Sincerity, the *ſame* Thing!—Is it poſſible? —Let me illuſtrate my Query by a Similitude, which our preſent Situation ſuggeſts. Sometimes an eaſy Compariſon is more convincing, than a laboured Argument.

From this pleaſing Eminence, We command an extenſive View of the Country. Our Eye connects the artleſs Grandeur of Nature, with the elegant Embelliſhments of the Summer-houſe. Nor is the public Road the leaſt entertaining Part of the Scene. Becauſe, it preſents Us with a *moving Picture*; with a perpetual Succeſſion of new Objects.—How many Travelers have paſſed in Review, ſince We took our Seat in this agreeable Elevation! Juſt at this Inſtant, a *Stage-coach* bolts out of the Lane: filled, I ſuppoſe, with Paſſengers, that reſide in the Neighbourhood, or are to lodge in the next Market-town. We will ſuppoſe them ſet down at their Journey's End. An Acquaintance viſits them: congratulates them on their Arrival: and aſks that cuſtomary Queſtion, "How they came?"—"We came, ſay "they, without walking a Step ourſelves; yet by "walking, as far as We were able."—Is this Anſwer intelligible? Are theſe Sentiments conſiſtent? So intelligible is my Friend's Doctrine. So conſiſtent is Juſtification, vouchſafed *without* the Deeds of the Law; and Juſtification obtained, by performing the Deeds of the Law, *as well* as We are able.

Ther. Without the Law, ſignifies, Without the Neceſſity of an exact and unerring Conformity to it.

Aſp. This is not *without*, but *by* the Law, qualified in the Rigour of its Demands, and departing

ſomewhat from the Perfection of its Precepts. Could You affirm, with any Propriety, that this Part of the Hemiſphere is *without the Sun?* Becauſe, an intervening Cloud has moderated its Fervour, and abated its Glare.

What ſays the Apoſtle? His Words in another Place, will determine his Meaning in this. If a State of Acceptance with GOD, be *of Works*; be referable to our own Obedience, whether ſincere or perfect: *it is no more of Grace* *; no more the Effect of free Favour, but a Recompence owing to Worth, or a Reward belonging to Worth.—Works and Grace, in Point of Juſtification, are irreconcilable Oppoſites †. On this Pinnacle they cannot ſtand together. One muſt ſupplant and overthrow the other.

But why do I ſpeak of Grace? If my Friend's Opinion prevail, Grace is at an end. What We took to be the Goſpel, turns out a Covenant of Works. Salvation ceaſes to be a free Gift, and becomes a neceſſary Payment. For, *to Him that worketh*, that performeth what the Law requires, *is the Reward not reckoned of Grace*; *but* He may claim it, as his Due; it muſt be paid Him, as Matter *of Debt* ‡.

Ther.

* *Rom.* xi. 6. The Paſſage produced by *Aſpaſio*, refers *immediately* to the Doctrine of Election, and but *remotely* to the Privilege of Juſtification. However, as the former includes the latter, if *that* be perfectly free, *this* cannot be the Conſequence of Works. The Argument, therefore, I apprehend, is concluſive, though the Proof is not ſo direct.

† *E diametro inter ſe opponuntur, Moſes & JESUS CHRISTUS: Lex & Promiſſio: facere & credere: Opera & Fides: Merces & Donum.* BENGEL.

‡ Rom. iv. 4.

Ther. You take no Notice of what I urged, concerning the *Benignity* of this Scheme; and how much it magnifies the Clemency of the great LEGISLATOR.

Aſp. But why ſhould Clemency erect its Throne, on the Ruins of almoſt every other Attribute?—This Method would diſhonour the *Veracity* of GOD; which has denounced a Curſe, upon every Deviation from his revealed Will.—It would depreciate the *Adminiſtration* of his Juſtice; which cannot but puniſh, whatever violates his ſacred Precepts.—It would greatly derogate from the *Dignity* of his Law; and make it a mere Thing of Wax. To bend; and truckle; and take its Form, from the Sin and Weakneſs of human Nature.

Ther. Will the divine Law then make no favourable Allowances for human Infirmities, for conſtitutional Faults, and Strength of Paſſion?

Aſp. Far be it from me to repreſent the Law of the MOST HIGH, either more ſtrict, or more yielding, than it really is. To avoid all Poſſibility of ſuch a Miſtake, let Us hear the Declaration of the Law itſelf. *Curſed is every One that continueth not in all Things, which are written in the Book of the Law to do them* *.

Every One; without any Exception of Perſons; without any Regard to Pleas, either of human Weakneſs, or violent Temptation.—*That continueth not*; it is not enough to obſerve theſe holy Commandments, in the general Tenour of our Converſation. Our Courſe of Obedience muſt be without any Intermiſſion; from the earlieſt Dawn of Reaſon, to the lateſt

* Gal. iii. 10.

Period of Life.—*In all Things*; We muſt refrain from all the Sins, that are forbidden, and from every Approach towards them. We muſt practiſe all the Virtues, that are enjoined, and in their full Extent of Perfection.

In a Word; the Law inſiſts upon Obedience, perfect in its *Principle*; perfect in all its *Parts*; perfect in every *Degree*; and in each of theſe Reſpects *perpetual* *.—The leaſt Deficiency in any one Particular, renders Us liable to Vengeance; and, notwithſtanding any Sorrow for Tranſgreſſions, notwithſtanding all Pretenſions to Sincerity of Heart, conſigns Us over to the Curſe.

Theron pauſed—He ſeemed to be ſtruck with Surpriſe.—But rallying his Thoughts, replied. According to your Interpretation, this is the Language of the Law; Curſed is every One, that is chargeable with the *leaſt* Sin. Nay, curſed is every One, that is not *perfectly* righteous. But if *this* be the Senſe of the Paſſage, Who of all Fleſh can be ſaved?

Aſp. Say rather; If the Demands of the divine Law are ſo wonderfully high; if its Sanction is ſo awfully rigorous; then muſt every Mouth be ſtopped —then is all the World become guilty before GOD —and, *by the Works of the Law ſhall no Man living be juſtified.*

Ther.

* That the Law inſiſts upon an Obedience *abſolutely perfect*, will be farther evident to the attentive Reader, if He conſiders the Tenour of St. *Paul*'s Argumentation, in his Epiſtle to the *Romans*, and to the *Galatians*. Particularly *Rom.* iii. 23. iv. 15. *Gal.* iii. 21. Which Paſſages imply, what *Chryſoſtom* expreſſes; Αλλως ουκ ενι δικαιον γενεσθαι εν νομῳ, αλλ' η παντα πληρωσαντα. Τουτο δε ουδενι γεγονε δυνατον· ουκουν διαπεπτωκεν η δικαιοσυνη αυτη. Tom. III. pag. 148. Edit. Savil.

Ther. "Curſed is every One, that is chargeable "with the leaſt Sin; that is not perfectly righte-"ous." I am aſtoniſhed at the Thought! How wretched then is the State of Mankind!

Aſp. Extremely wretched. And ſo much the more, becauſe they are folding their Hands in a liſtleſs and gay Inſenſibility; when they ſhould be lifting them up to GOD, for Deliverance from the Wrath to come. Becauſe, they are ſleeping in a falſe Security, or dreaming in preſumptuous Hope; while they ſhould be flying to the Strong-hold, and eſcaping for their Life; even for the Life of their immortal Souls.

The State of Mankind is moſt truly deſcribed by the Prophet. The Curſe of GOD, like *a* tremendous *Fire, is kindled* all around them, *yet they know it not; it burns*, fiercer than ten thouſand fiery Furnaces, *yet they lay it not to Heart* *.—O! that the Terrors of the LORD, and the Voice of Conſcience, may awaken them, may rouſe them, before it be too late!

Ther. Will not ſuch exceſſively ſevere Doctrine drive People to Deſpair?

Aſp. It may. It ought.—This, I apprehend, increaſes your Aſtoniſhment.—But allow me to explain myſelf. A Deſpair I mean, of being reconciled to the Almighty GOD, and of obtaining eternal Happineſs, by any Satisfaction or any Duties of our own. This Deſpair is the Prelude to heavenly Hope, and holy Joy. The Goſpel is a gracious Proviſion, made by the ſupreme royal Prerogative, for ſuch deſperate Souls. In this Deſpair, I am willing to live, and deſirous to die.

* Iſai. xlii. 25.

Ther. Now You mention *willing*, how can You forget that gracious Manifeſto, publiſhed by the condeſcending KING of Heaven; *If there be firſt a* willing *Mind, it is accepted, according to what a Man hath, not according to what He hath not* *. Is it not plain from this Text, that infinite Goodneſs will admit our honeſt, though imperfect Endeavours? And, ſince We are not able to pay an *unſinning*, will mercifully accept our *beſt* Obedience.

Aſp. I do not forget, but poſſibly my Friend may miſapply the gracious Manifeſto.—To whom was the Word of this Conſolation ſent? To true Believers; who *were eſtabliſhed in CHRIST* †; *were ſanctified in CHRIST* ‡; *and abounded in Faith* ‖. —If You likewiſe, my dear *Theron*, acknowledge Yourſelf a vile Sinner in your worſt, and an unprofitable Servant in your beſt Eſtate: if, in conſequence of this Acknowledgment, You fly for Refuge to the Wounds of a crucified SAVIOUR; and rely, for Salvation, only on his Obedience unto Death: then, You imitate thoſe *Corinthian* Converts. Then You may apply that indulgent Declaration to Yourſelf. And then would I venture to addreſs You, in the elegant and chearing Language of the royal PREACHER; *Go thy Way, eat thy Bread with Joy, and drink thy Wine with a merry Heart; for GOD* now *accepteth* § both thy Perſon, and thy Performances.

But,

* 2 Cor. viii. 12. † 2 Cor. i. 21. ‡ 1 Cor. i. 2. ‖ 2 Cor. viii. 7.

§ *Eccleſ.* ix. 7.—*Aſpaſio*'s Remark diſcovers an *Ambiguity* in the Word *accepted*.—If People mean, That ſincere Obedience ſhall be accepted, as *their juſtifying* Righteouſneſs; as that which conſtitutes their Title to everlaſting

But, if You overlook the Righteouſneſs of the bleſſed *JESUS*; if You depend upon Yourſelf and your own Attainments; You are (how ſhall I ſpeak it!) not accepted, but accurſed. In ſuch a Caſe, You have already heard your Doom denounced, by the Leader of the *Jews*. You may hear it ratified, by the Apoſtle of the *Gentiles*. *As many as are of the Works of the Law*, who ſeek Juſtification by their own Obſervance of its Commands, *are under the Curſe* *.

Ther. Under the Curſe! Not becauſe We preſumptuouſly tranſgreſs; only becauſe, our Attempts to obey, though faithfully exerted, are attended with Defects! Is not this unreaſonable and ſhocking?—*Unreaſonable*, that the GOD of Juſtice ſhould eſtabliſh a Law of ſuch conſummate Perfection, as no Child of *Adam* can, even with his utmoſt Aſſiduity and Care, fulfil? *Shocking*, that the GOD of Mercy ſhould thunder out ſo ſevere a Denunciation, on the leaſt inadvertent Breach, on every unavoidable

laſting Felicity; the Propoſition is extremely falſe.—If they mean; That the ſincere Obedience of juſtified Perſons, though very imperfect in itſelf, ſhall be *graciouſly regarded* in *CHRIST*; ſhall find Favour through his all-recommending Merit; the Sentiment is unqueſtionably true.

When *Tigranes* ſaw the reſolute and intrepid *Lucullus* marching up, with a Handful of Men, to attack his Hundreds of Thouſands; He ſaid, with an Air of Rallery; *Do they come as Ambaſſadors? Then they are a great Number. Do they advance as Enemies? Then they are very few.* With much greater Propriety may *Aſpaſio* ſay; Is Sincerity the *Effect of Faith?* Then We may rejoice in it, with the happy Apoſtle, 2 *Cor.* i. 12. Would Sincerity be the *Condition of our Juſtification?* Then We muſt renounce it, with holy *Job*, Chap. ix. 15.

* Gal. iii. 10.

Failure?—This exceeds the relentleſs Rigour of *Draco*, or the tyrannical Impoſitions of the *Ægyptian* Taſk-maſters. *Draco* is ſaid to have written his Laws in Blood. Yet his Inſtitutions, though very difficult to be obſerved, were not abſolutely impracticable. And, though the *Ægyptian* Taſk-maſters inſiſted upon the full Tale of Bricks, without allowing the full Proportion of Straw, yet the Puniſhment they inflicted, was incomparably leſs than everlaſting Deſtruction.

Aſp. The *leaſt* Breach!—You take it then for granted, that ſome Violations of Duty are ſmall and inconſiderable. But this Extent and Severity of the divine Law, concur to correct every ſuch miſtaken Apprehenſion. They inform Us; that thoſe Sins, in which the Light of Nature could diſcern but little Turpitude; that thoſe Sins of which the Voice of Reaſon would be apt to ſay, *Is it not a little one?* Even thoſe Sins are unſpeakably odious, and intolerably loathſome, in the Eye of JEHOVAH. His Nature is ſo pure, and his Will ſo righteous, that He cannot away with any Sin; He will not ſpare any Tranſgreſſion; but pronounces a Curſe, even the Curſe of everlaſting Condemnation, upon all Iniquity.—This beſpeaks Purity and a Juſtice, worthy of GOD; great, tranſcendent, and deeply to be revered. Made ſenſible of this, We ſhall cry out with the Pſalmiſt; *My Fleſh trembleth for fear of Thee, and I am afraid of thy Judgments.*

But this Severity, You imagine, claſhes with the lovely Attribute of Mercy.—If GOD Almighty, in delivering his Law to fallen Mankind, intended to propoſe the *Means* of their *Juſtification*;

I own, your Argument would be valid, and your Inference undeniable. But the SUPREME LEGISLATOR had a very different, a far more myſterious Deſign.—However, before We proceed to touch upon this Point, let me deſire to know *your* Opinion.

For what Reaſons, think you, was the Law ordained?

Ther. For what Reaſons?—To deter Men from the Commiſſion of Vice, and excite them to the Practice of Virtue.—To ſet before them a Rule for their Conduct; which if they diligently obſerve, they ſhall be *rewarded* with eternal Happineſs; which if they preſumptuouſly tranſgreſs, they ſhall be *puniſhed* with eternal Miſery.

Aſp. If Man had never fallen, this Doctrine had been ſound Divinity; and this Method, a practicable Scheme. But, ever ſince the Fall, ſuch a Way of Salvation, is ſomewhat like the *North-Eaſt* Paſſage. As Mountains of Ice, and the ſevereſt Rigours of Winter, block up *this:* ſo, extreme Impotence in Man, and the utmoſt Perfection in the Law, bar up *that.—The Law*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *was weak* *; was abſolutely unable to juſtify Mankind, or any individual Perſon. Unable, not through any Defect in its Conſtitutions, but *through the Fleſh*; through the Corruption and Infirmity of human Nature.

Therefore, in another Place He adds; IF *there had been a Law given, which could have given Life* †.

* *Rom.* viii. 3. Το αδυνατον του νομου, ſays the Apoſtle. Which reads flat in our Verſion, *What the Law could not do.* But is, in the Original, a vigorous Phraſe, and expreſſes an *utter Impoſſibility.*

† Gal. iii. 21.

A Way of ſpeaking which denotes, not a Difficulty, but an *Impoſſibility*. Exactly like that Speech of JEHOVAH to *Abraham*; IF *a Man can number the Duſt of the Earth* *.—Should You aſk, Why the Law could not give a Title to Life? I anſwer, Becauſe fallen Man was incapable of fulfilling its Precepts.—And why was He incapable? Becauſe thoſe Precepts required Perfection; inſiſted on Perfection; and would admit of no Obedience, which came ſhort of Perfection †, to paſs for a juſtifying Righteouſneſs.

——— *So Man could not the moral Part*
Perform, and not performing, cannot live ‡.

This is a Truth, much to be regarded. It is a fundamental Point, and of the utmoſt Conſequence, in the Scheme of Chriſtianity. Yet, I know not how it is, many People have overlooked it, or miſtaken

* Gen. xiii. 16.

† This, and every material Article relating to the grand Subject of Juſtification, are clearly ſtated, ſolidly eſtabliſhed, and I think unanſwerably defended, in a little Treatiſe entitled, *A Vindication of the eternal Law and everlaſting Goſpel*, by Mr. *John Beart*. When my Dialogues were firſt publiſhed, I was unacquainted with this moſt excellent Treatiſe. I am obliged to a benevolent *Lady*, for recommending it to me, and furniſhing me with it. Who has at her own Expence, reprinted the Work; in order to diſtribute it among her Friends, and beſtow it upon the Poor. By which, ſhe does an Honour to her own Judgment, as well as a ſingular Service to the Chriſtian Cauſe. I have met with nothing more ſatisfactory, or more convincing. Nothing ſo conciſe, and at the ſame Time ſo comprehenſive. Whoever has this Book, has the very Sinews of the Argument, and the very Marrow of the Doctrine.

‡ MILTON, Book XII. 298.

taken it. Many well-meaning People have unwarily entertained the ſame Notion with my *Theron*. Not apprehenſive, that they fruſtrate hereby the Grace of GOD, and render it of none Effect with regard to themſelves.—If You examine the ſcriptural Account of the Law, You will find it quite of another Strain.

Ther. Pray let me hear the ſcriptural Account. For, whenever thoſe DIVINE ORACLES ſpeak, I am all Attention. Where-ever they interpoſe their Authority, I am all Submiſſion.

Aſp. By the Law is the Knowledge of Sin *. Far from being our Juſtifier, it is our Accuſer. It arraigns and proves Us guilty. It demonſtrates, beyond all Poſſibility of Contradiction, that the very beſt among Us, have failed and come ſhort of our Duty; nay, that the very beſt among Us, have done amiſs, and dealt wickedly.

I was alive without the Law once, ſays the Apoſtle †. I thought myſelf upright, obedient, holy; and entitled, by virtue of theſe Qualifications, to Life eternal. *But when the Commandment came*, ſhining in its Purity, and operating with Power, *Sin revived*; a clear and lively Senſe of Guilt ſhot, like a piercing Ray, through all my Soul. I ſaw myſelf chargeable with many paſt Provocations, I felt myſelf ſubject to much remaining Corruption. In conſequence of which, *I died*; my vain Conceits were blaſted; my preſumptuous Hopes expired; I could not but acknowledge myſelf, juſtly liable to Condemnation and Death.

Ther. It had this Effect on *Saul*, when He was a malignant and barbarous Perſecutor. But, when People

* Rom. iii. 20. † Rom. vii. 9.

People are virtuous and benevolent, what Purpoſe does it then ſerve?

Aſp. A very important one. Yet ſuch as may, probably, at the firſt Hearing, affect You with a little Surpriſe. *The Law entered*, ſays the Apoſtle, *that the Offence might* ——

Ther. Be *reſtrained*, no doubt.

Aſp. That the Offence might *abound* *, is the Aſſertion.

Ther. Surpriſing indeed! Is it poſſible that GOD's Law ſhould give Countenance to Sin? Nay, add Spurs to the Sinner?

Aſp. Let Us beware of miſtaking our ſacred Caſuiſt. The Law entered, not that the Commiſſion of Sin might be *authorized*, but that the Abundance of our Sins might be *manifeſted*. That all Mankind, even your virtuous Perſons, may perceive the great Impurity of their Hearts †; the great Multitude of their Iniquities; and the horrible Sinfulneſs of (what is called) the leaſt Sin in the Sight of GOD.

This End could not be anſwered by a Law, relaxed in its Demands, or warping to our Weakneſs; only by a Syſtem of Precepts, *every* Way exact, and in *all* Degrees perfect.—Whoever would repreſent to his Neighbour, the Spots that ſully, or the Scars that diſfigure his Countenance, muſt effect the Deſign not by a ſtained, but by a pure Mirror.

Ther. The Knowledge of Sin, and a Conviction of our exceeding Sinfulneſs!—Theſe are Intentions, which I ſhould not have ſuſpected.

Aſp.

* Rom. v. 20.

† *And* therefore *was Law giv'n them, to evince*
Their natural Pravity. MILT. B. XII. 287.

Aſp. Theſe are not all. There is another Intention of the Law, equally neceſſary, and no leſs awful. *It reveals the Wrath of GOD, againſt all Ungodlineſs and Unrighteouſneſs of Men* *.—Having ſet before the Sinner, his innumerable Offences, and enormous Guilt; it proceeds to the Doom, which He deſerves. It unſheaths the Sword of Juſtice, and threatens the Offender with everlaſting Deſtruction. Againſt *all* Ungodlineſs, upon *every* Tranſgreſſion, it denounces the Curſe—the inſupportable and eternal Curſe of GOD.

Ther. A modern Writer ſuppoſes, that GOD may *ſet aſide* the Law, in favour of frail Men. I might far more reaſonably ſuppoſe, that He would *mitigate* the Law, on the ſame Conſideration. But what You urge, makes me afraid to lean on ſo precarious a Prop.

Aſp. To look for Comfort and Salvation from this Quarter, would be worſe than leaning on a precarious Prop. It would be to lean, as the *Arabian* Proverb ſpeaks, on a Wave of the Sea: which will not only fail to ſupport, but will certainly ſwallow up, the unadviſed and raſh Depender. For ONE greater than any modern Writer has affirmed, that every Word or Thought, oppoſite to the Spirit of the Law, renders a Man liable to Hell fire †.

Set aſide or *mitigate!* No, *Theron*; rather than the divine Law ſhould loſe its Honours, *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* were laid in Aſhes; the antient World was deſtroyed with a Deluge; the preſent Frame of Nature is deſtined to the Flames, and all its unholy Inhabitants will be condemned to Hell.—Nay, rather than the *leaſt Tittle* of the Law ſhould paſs unaccom-

* Rom. i. 18. † Matt. v. 22, 29, 30.

unaccompliſhed, its Curſe has been executed on GOD's own SON; and all its Injunctions have been fulfilled, in the Perſon of *JESUS CHRIST*. Which demonſtrates the DEITY to be inflexibly in earneſt, as to every Word, ſpoken in his perfect Law.

Ther. As I dare not confide in the modern proviſionary *Salvo*, ſo neither can I accede to your ſevere and terrifying Notions.—The Laws of a wiſe and beneficent Governor, are calculated for the *Good* of his Subjects. What Good, what Advantage can accrue to Us, from receiving ſuch a Sentence, and poſſeſſing ſuch Convictions?

Aſp. Though I might mention many Advantages, I ſhall content myſelf with ſelecting one. Which is not only valuable in itſelf, but the Introduction to *every* ſpiritual Bleſſing.—When, by the Inſtrumentality of the Law, and the Illumination of the SPIRIT, We are brought under ſuch Convictions; then We are taught to *ſee* our Danger; then We are made to *feel* our Miſery: and then We ſhall no longer ſleep in Security, but ſolicitouſly look out for Deliverance, and gladly accept the ſovereign Remedy.

Ther. The Law, according to your Repreſentation, is intended to *accuſe* me—to *convict* me—to *condemn* me. So it becomes, inſtead of a ſalutary, a killing Syſtem.

Aſp. The Letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth Life *. If We adhere to the literal Senſe, without attending to the ſpiritual Deſign: if We regard only the Precept and the Sanction, as they ſtand in *themſelves*; and neither conſider, nor improve them, as acting in *Subſer-*

* 2 Cor. iii. 6.

Subſerviency to the MEDIATOR's Righteouſneſs; they are doubtleſs a killing Ordinance, and bind Us down under a Sentence of Death. But rightly improved—Hold! Let me proceed no farther with the Argument.

You are a Sportſman, *Theron*, and delight in the manly Recreations of the Field. You muſt therefore have read that fine Poem, which ſo elegantly deſcribes your favourite Diverſion.

Ther. *The* CHACE, I ſuppoſe, You mean.

Aſp. The ſame.—Do You remember the Deſcription of the *royal Stag Chace?*

Ther. Perfectly well. It is not a Week, ſince I peruſed the whole Paſſage; and with as much Pleaſure, as if it had been entirely new.

Aſp. Then You can give me a Summary of the agreeable Narrative.

Ther. I can. But will not this Chace lead Us very far from our Subject?

Aſp. Perhaps, not ſo far as You imagine. I have a Reaſon for my Requeſt.

Ther. What Reaſon, I beſeech You?

Aſp. You ſhall ſoon know. Only favour me with the Account.

Ther. I proteſt, I cannot diſcern the leaſt Connection, between theſe rural Sports, and the grand Topic of our Converſation. However, ſince You command, I will implicitly obey.

The Stag, rouſed from his Lair, ſhakes his dappled Sides; toſſes his beamy Head; and, conſcious of ſuperior Agility, ſeems to defy the gathering Storm. —You ſee, ſpeaking of Poetry, I have catched ſomething of the poetical Strain.

Aſp. So much the better. This enlivened Manner excites my Curioſity. It makes me more deſirous to hear the Sequel.

Ther. Firſt, He has recourſe to Stratagem, and evaſive Shifts. He plunges into the Copſe; darts acroſs the Glade; and wheels about in doubling Mazes; as though He would purſue, even the Foe He avoids. The full-mouthed Pack unravel all his Windings, and drive Him from his wily Arts.

Now, He betakes Himſelf to Flight, and confides in his Speed. He burſts through the Woods; bounds over the Lawns; and leaves the lagging Beagles far behind. The Beagles ſlow, but ſure, trace his Steps, through Woods, through Lawns, through half the extended Foreſt. Unwearied, ſtill unwearied, they urge their ardent Way, and gain upon the alarmed Object of their Purſuit.

Again He flies. Flies with redoubled Swiftneſs. Shoots down the Steep; ſtrains up the Hill; ſweeps along the Fields; and, at laſt, takes ſhelter in the inmoſt Receſs of ſome ſequeſtered Grove. The ſagacious Hounds hang, with greedy Noſtrils, on the Scent. They recover, by indefatigable Aſſiduity, the Ground they had loſt. Up they come a third Time; and, joining in a general Peal of Vengeance, hurry the affrighted Animal from his ſhort Concealment.

Perplexed, and in the utmoſt Diſtreſs, He ſeeks the numerous Herd. He would loſe Himſelf, and elude his Purſuers, amidſt the Multitude of his Fellows. But they, unconcerned for a Brother's Woe, ſhun the miſerable Creature, or expel him from the ſelfiſh Circle.—Abandoned by his Aſſociates, and haunted with Apprehenſions of approaching Ruin,

He

He trembles at every Leaf that ſhakes. He ſtarts; He ſprings; and wild, and ſwift as the Wind, flies he knows not where, yet pours all his Soul in Flight.—Vain, vain are his Efforts. The horrid Cry, lately leſſened, thickens upon the Gale, and thunders in his Ear.—Now, the poor breathleſs Victim is full in View. His Sprightlineſs forſakes Him. His Agility is ſpent. See! How He toils in yonder Valley, with faultering Limbs, and a hobling Gait. The Sight of their Game, quickens the Pace, and whets the Ardour, of the impetuous Hounds. With tumultuous Violence they ruſh in, and with clamorous Joy demand their Prey.

What can He do? Surrounded as He is, with inſulting Tongues, and ravenous Jaws? Deſpair is capable of inſpiriting even the timorous Breaſt. Having nothing to hope, He forgets to fear. He faces about, and makes a reſolute Stand. The Trunk of a ſturdy Tree, covers his Rear; and his own branching Horns, defend Him in Front. He ruſhes upon his Adverſaries; goars ſome; lays others groveling on the Turf; and makes the whole coward Pack give way.

Encouraged by this unexpected Succeſs, his Hopes revive. He rallies once again his drooping Spirits; exerts the little Remainder of his Strength; and ſprings through the Midſt of the retiring Rout.—It is his laſt, laſt Chance. He ſtretches every Nerve; once more loſes Sight of the Rabble from the Kennel; and, finding no Security on the Land, takes to the Water. He throws his burning Sides into the River; ſails down the cooling Stream; and ſlinks away to the Verge of ſome little ſhelving Iſland. There, finding a Reſting-place for his Feet,

Feet, He ſkulks cloſe to the ſhady Margin. All immerſed in the Wave, excepting only his Noſtrils, He baffles, for a while, the prying Eye of Man, and the keener Smell of Brute.

Diſcovered, at length, and forced to quit this unavailing Refuge, He climbs the ſlippery Bank. Unable to fly any longer, He ſtands at bay againſt an aged Willow. Stands, all faint with Toil, and ſobbing with Anguiſh. The Crouds that gather round Him, with mercileſs and outrageous Tranſport, triumph in his Miſery. A Multitude of blood-thirſty Throats, joined with the ſonorous Horn, ring his funeral Knell.—The Tears, till this fatal Inſtant unknown, guſh from his languiſhing Eyes, and roll down his reeking Cheeks. He caſts one more Look on the Woods, the Lawns, the pleaſing Scenes of his former Delights. Adieu! A long Adieu to theſe! He now expects his Murderers; and prepares, as his laſt poor Conſolation, to ſell his Life as dear as poſſible.

At this moſt critical Juncture, the *royal* Sportſman comes up. He ſees the diſtreſſed Creature; and, as ſoon as he ſees, He pities. The Clemency, which attends the Throne, accompanies even the Diverſions of Majeſty. He iſſues the high Command. The prohibitory Signal is given. The Pack, though eager for Blood, are checked in a Moment. And not checked only, but called off * from the Prey, Diſap-

* *Called off*, I apprehend, is too flat. *Tore off* would have been more expreſſive. And this would have reminded Us of a moſt beautiful Metaphor, uſed by the ſacred Hiſtorian; when He deſcribes, or rather paints, the Procedure of *David*, in the Cave, 1 *Sam.* xxiv. 7. His Men urged Him, and with great Vehemence, to ſlay *Saul*; ſince Providence had delivered that implacable

Disappointed and growling, they retire; and leave the intended Victim of their Fury, to enjoy his Liberty, his Safety, and his Ease again.

I have now followed the Stag, till I have tired your Patience. Why did You suffer me to run on, at this extravagant Rate? You know I am, on these favourite Topics, an everlasting Talker.

Asp. Why this Apology, *Theron?* I am sure You did not see my Mouth yawn, or my Head nod, while You was pursuing your Subject. Besides, I intend to make Reprisals, and put *your* Attention to the same Tryal.

Thus the Strictness of the *Law* pursues the Soul; dislodges it from every Refuge of Lies; and never remits its terrifying Menaces, till the poor Delinquent ceases from Self-confidence, and fixes on *CHRIST* for his whole Salvation *.

The Man, perhaps, is awakened into a serious Concern for his eternal State. In consequence of

Persecutor into his Hand. Our Translation says, *He broke them.* Whereas the Original says, *He tore them off,* eager and impatient as they were; and retained them from murdering the helpless King.—It seems to be an Allusion to the above-mentioned Practice of Huntsmen; who *tear off* the ravenous Pack, and with-hold them from devouring the fallen Prey.—It is the same Word, which expresses the Action of *Sampson*; when *He rent* asunder the young Lion, and tore Him Limb from Limb. ישסע. See *Judg.* xiv. 6.

* *Lex Hominem urget, donec is ad* CHRISTUM *confugit. Tum ipsa dicit; Asylum es nactus; desino Te persequi; sapis, salvus es.* Bengel. That is; the *Law* urges and pursues the *Sinner*, till He flies for Refuge to *JESUS CHRIST.* Then the Law speaks to this Effect; "You are entered into the *Strong-hold*, and I remit the "Pursuit; my Demands are satisfied, and my Curses "silenced. You are wise; You are safe; You are "happy."

which, He relinquiſhes his profane and iniquitous Practices. Breaks the Sabbath, and defrauds his Neighbour no more.—But the Law quickly repreſents, and in a glaring Light, that a *negative* Obedience is by no means ſufficient.

Upon this, He betakes Himſelf to a Courſe of *poſitive* Holineſs. Gets acquainted with religious People, and performs religious Duties. Prays in ſecret, and attends public Ordinances. Conſcientiouſly obſerves the LORD's Day, and regulates his Behaviour by the Rule of GOD's Commandments. Now, He is ready to congratulate Himſelf on his remarkable and hopeful Reformation.

Soon he perceives, that all his Proficiency is but Skin-deep: a mere *outſide* Varniſh: which has not penetrated the inner Man. He begins, therefore, to watch over the Motions, and bewail the Evils of his Heart. He labours to ſubdue Pride, and curb Paſſion; to purge out filthy Luſts, and to baniſh ſpiritual Wickedneſs. Notwithſtanding all his Vigilance, Conſcience flies in his Face, either for the Neglect of ſome Virtue, or the Commiſſion of ſome Sin. The Law rings in his Ear that terrible Denunciation; "Curſed is He, that performeth not "*all* Things."

Struck by this Conviction, his Wounds bleed afreſh. He is obliged to ſeek ſome new Balm for his Sore. In order to appeaſe an offended GOD, and atone for his ſinful Relapſes, He makes many ſorrowful Confeſſions; poſſibly, ſubmits to voluntary Sufferings. He denies Himſelf, and beſtows liberally on the Poor. He ſighs deeply, and mourns bitterly.—But can Waters that are muddy, cleanſe the Garment that is filthy? Wilt Thou ſatisfy, O

vain Man, wilt Thou ſatisfy for one Sin, by committing another? In *theſe* penitential Exerciſes, were thy Thoughts ſteadily devout? In *thoſe* Acts of Beneficence, were thy Affections truly charitable? And did *both* proceed from a pure undefiled Heart? If not, ſuch fanſied Reparations of paſt Faults, only aggravate the heavy Score.

What ſhall He do? He cannot pay. To beg He is aſhamed. Fain would He enter into Life, yet not be too much indebted to Grace. He attempts therefore to *compound* with Heaven. He binds Himſelf by ſolemn Vows, perhaps by ſacramental Engagements, to uſe greater Circumſpection for the future. Then turns his Eye to the divine MEDIATOR; not with a View of relying wholly on his Righteouſneſs; but only to obtain ſuch a Supply, as may make up the Deficiencies of his own.—Somewhat like this was the Miſtake of the *Galatian* Converts; againſt which St. *Paul*, in his Epiſtle to that People, ſo ſolidly diſputes, and ſo ſharply inveighs *. Aſſuring them, that if they add to their REDEEMER's Death and Obedience, any other Requiſite whatſoever, in the Matter of Acceptance with GOD, *CHRIST ſhall profit them nothing.*

For a while, He holds faſt his purpoſed Integrity. At length, falling ſhort, evidently if not ſcandalouſly ſhort, in executing his Part, a ſtartling

* *Sharply* indeed! For, inſtead of ſaluting them, under the honourable Title of *Saints, and Faithful in CHRIST JESUS*; He ſtigmatizes them with that ſevere Appellation, *O fooliſh Galatians!*—And as to their Practice, which was a Departure from Juſtification by *CHRIST alone*, He ſtyles it, not merely an Error, but an Error of the moſt miſchievous and horrid Kind—*an* Infatuation, *a Bewitchery*, Τις ἐβάσκανε. Gal. iii. 1.

Voice ſounds in his Ear, that dreadful Alarm; "Curſed is He that *continueth* not in all Things." An impartial Conſcience interprets the Voice; and undeniably proves, that whoever commits the leaſt Sin, or fails in any Point, does not continue in all Things. His Heart ſinks with Diſcouragement, and all his Reſolutions hang their enfeebled Heads. He has tried every Method, that He can deviſe; and has found every Method ineffectual. All his Expedients are a Spider's Web; and his Hope is, as the Giving up of the Ghoſt *.

His Soul, purſued by the Law, and hunted by Terror, is brought to the Gates of Death, or the very Brink of Deſpair. And now the PRINCE of Peace, now the LORD our Righteouſneſs, appears for his Reſcue. Now is accompliſhed that gracious Declaration; *O Iſrael, thou haſt deſtroyed thyſelf, but in me is thy Help* †.—Driven from every falſe Refuge, and drawn by the bleſſed SPIRIT, He comes weary and heavy laden to *CHRIST*. Convinced of the Sin of his Nature, the Sin of his Life,

* St. *Paul* expreſſes all this in his uſual Manner; that is, very conciſely, yet very forcibly, *Gal.* iii. 23. Υπο νομον εφρουρουμεθα συγκεκλεισμενοι εις την μελλουσαν πιστιν. *We were kept under the Law, ſhut up unto Faith.* He compares the Law, its Demands and its Curſes, to a *Garriſon* or *Priſon*. The Walls ſo ſtrong, that it is impoſſible to make a Breach in them; ſo high, that it is equally impoſſible to overleap them. Let the confined Captive, turn which Way He will, make whatever Attempt He can, there appears no Hope of a Releaſe; nay, there remains no Poſſibility of Eſcape. *Until* the bleſſed REDEEMER, by his Obedience and Death, open a Door of Deliverance. This Door Faith diſcerns; through this Door Faith conducts the Sinner; and thus tranſmits Him into Light and Liberty.

† Hoſ. xiii. 9.

Life, and the Sin of his beſt Duties, He renounces Himſelf in every View. This is all his Salvation, and all his Deſire, that He may win *CHRIST*, and be found in Him. Did that poor afflicted Woman ſay, *If I may but touch his Garment, I ſhall be whole?* With equal Ardour does this enlightened Sinner cry; "If I may but have Fellowſhip with "the glorious IMMANUEL, in his Merits "and in his Spirit, I am alive from the Dead; I "am happy for ever."

Having ſeen a Glimpſe of the REDEEMER and his tranſcendent Excellency; having received a Taſte from the inexhauſtible Fulneſs of his Grace; O! how He longs for brighter Manifeſtations! How He thirſts after more plentiful Draughts!—*Whoſoever comes to CHRIST, ſhall in no wiſe be caſt out.* He that awakens theſe ardent Deſires, in his due Time gives the deſired Bleſſings. After various Conflicts, the poor *ungodly* Wretch *believes* *. He believes, that the SON of the MOST HIGH died in *his* Stead, and was obedient for *his* Juſtification. Believes, that all the Riches of the adored MEDIATOR's Life and Death are for Sinners—for the worſt of Sinners—for *Him* †.

By

* Rom. iv. 5.

† See this Work of Grace, and Procedure of Converſion, more copiouſly diſplayed, in a valuable little Piece intitled, *Human Nature in its fourfold State*, by Mr. THOMAS BOSTON, page 227.—Which, in my Opinion, is one of our beſt Books for common Readers. The Sentences are ſhort, and the Compariſons ſtriking. The Language is eaſy, and the Doctrine evangelical. The Method proper, the Plan comprehenſive, the Manner ſearching, convincing, yet conſolatory.—If another celebrated Treatiſe is ſtyled, *The whole* Duty *of Man*, I would

By this Faith, receiving *CHRIST* and his Benefits, his Heart is purified; his Heart is quickened. He abhors every evil Way, and is fitted for every good Work.—Though Temptations aſſault Him, He derives Strength from his SAVIOUR; reſiſts the Devil; and is faithful unto Death.—Though Corruptions defile Him, He flies to the *Fountain opened for Uncleanneſs* *; makes daily, hourly Application of the Blood of Sprinkling; and goes on his Way, rejoicing in GOD his SAVIOUR.

Ther. Your Diſcourſe puts me in mind of *Abſalom*'s Procedure, when *Joab* refuſed to make Him a Viſit. The Prince ordered his Servants to ſet on fire the General's ſtanding Corn †. This Stratagem had its intended Effect. The Apprehenſion of Danger *drove* Him, when the reſpectful Invitation would not *lead* Him, to a perſonal Interview. You ſeem to ſuppoſe, that the Law was made ſo perfect and ſo rigorous, with ſome ſuch Deſign. A Deſign, to lay Us under a *Neceſſity*, of renouncing our own Works, and flying to the Atonement of *CHRIST*.

Aſp. With ſuch a Deſign it was delivered on *Sinai*. And for this Opinion, I have a far better Authority, than my own Suppoſition. We are aſſured by unerring Wiſdom, That *CHRIST is the End of the Law* ‡. It points invariably to Him. It terminates wholly in Him. And *then* obtains its principal Purpoſe, when Sinners are brought to their

call this, *The* WHOLE *of Man*. As it compriſes—what He *was* by Creation—what He *is* by Tranſgreſſion—what He *ſhould be* through Grace—and then what He *will be* in Glory.

* Zech. xiii. 1. † 2 Sam. xiv. 30. ‡ Rom. x. 4.

their Divine REDEEMER, for Righteouſneſs. Then, there is no Occaſion for a *Mitigation* of the Law; for an Abatement of its Demands, or a Moderation of its Curſe. Becauſe, We have *that* in *CHRIST*, which fulfils its Demands and exhauſts its Curſe; which maintains its Honour, yet juſtifies its Tranſgreſſor.

The Law hath concluded all Mankind *under Sin* *. Hath drawn, as it were, a Net of Guilt and Vengeance round the whole World. Yet not with an Intention, that any ſhould be diſcouraged now, or periſh for ever: but that every One may ſee his inexpreſſible Need, of a SAVIOUR's Death, and of a SAVIOUR's Obedience †. That, being

* *Gal.* iii. 22. Συνέκλεισε.—The ſacred Original is ſomewhat more comprehenſive than *Aſpaſio*'s Interpretation. It is not πάντας, but τὰ πάντα. Which denotes *Things*, as well as *Perſons*: And implies, that nothing We *have*, nothing We *do*, is free from Sin; till the Merits of *CHRIST* intervene, and the Blood of *CHRIST* be ſprinkled.

† *Witſius*, ſpeaking of the Law delivered at *Sinai*, ſays; *Facta eſt iſta Fœderis Operum Commemoratio, ad Iſraelitas Peccatorum & Miſeriæ ſuæ convincendos, ex ſeipſis expellendos, de Neceſſitate Satisfactionis edocendos, & ad CHRISTUM compellendos: & ſic inſervit Fœderi Gratiæ.*

Animadver. IREN. p. 99.

The *Nature* and *Deſign* of the Law were, I think, emblematically taught, by the Circumſtances attending its *Delivery*.—The Mountain, not to be trodden by any *Iſraelite*, or touched by any Beaſt, on pain of Death—The Voice of Thunder, and the Glare of Lightning—The Sound of the Trumpet, and the Clouds of Smoke—The vaſt Range of Hills and Rocks, trembling to their Center—Six hundred thouſand Men ſtruck with inexpreſſible Conſternation—And *Moſes*, even *Moſes* himſelf, the Favourite of Heaven, terrified exceedingly—All theſe indicated,

being thus prepared, both to value and receive ſo precious a Bleſſing, *the Promiſe of* Juſtification *by Faith in JESUS CHRIST may be given*—freely given *to them that believe.*

Let Us advert to this grand Aim of the Law. Then, We ſhall ſee Goodneſs, unqueſtionable and ſovereign Goodneſs, in forming its Conſtitution ſo *ſublimely perfect*, and making its Threatenings ſo *inflexibly ſevere.* Excluſive of this wholeſome Severity, We ſhould ſupinely diſeſteem, perhaps, wantonly reject, the Grace of the Goſpel.—The *prodigal Son* would never have returned to his Father, in that humble, ſubmiſſive, ſupplicating Poſture; if He had not found his Circumſtances utterly ruined, and felt Himſelf periſhing with Hunger. No more would the conceited Sons of *Adam*, diſclaim all Pretence to any Merit of their own; and, with the Halter * of Self-condemnation about their Necks, fall down at the Feet of a merciful REDEEMER; if they were not inſtigated by the ſharp Goad, or rather driven by the flaming Sword of the Law.

Ther.

dicated the *righteous*, the *rigorous*, and the *awful* Import of "The Word ſpoken."

Nor was the *Effect* of theſe aſtoniſhing Incidents, without a ſpiritual Meaning. The People durſt not adventure upon a *perſonal* Approach, but had recourſe to a *Mediator*. They requeſted, that *Moſes* might interpoſe; and tranſact Affairs, between the terrible JEHOVAH, and the guilty Congregation.—Such an Impreſſion, the Purity and the Rigour of the Law, ſhould make on our Hearts: ſhould drive Us from Self to a SAVIOUR; deter Us from confiding in the Righteouſneſs of Works, and urge Us to ſeek the Righteouſneſs of free Grace.

* Alluding to thoſe remarkable Words of *Benhadad's* Servants; *Let Us put Sackcloth upon our Loins*, and Ropes upon our Heads, *and go out to meet the King of Iſrael; peradventure He will ſave thy Life*, 1 Kings xx. 31.

Ther. Has the Law then nothing to do with our Temper and Converſation? Is it no longer to be conſidered as a Syſtem of Duties? No longer to be regarded as a Rule of Life?

Aſp. When it has forced the Lines of Self-righteouſneſs, and driven Us to *JESUS CHRIST* (that only Citadel of Safety!) for Acceptance and Salvation; *then* it ſerves as a Rule for our Conduct. *Then* it ſhews Us, like a Friend and a Guide, how to order our Converſation, and adorn our Profeſſion; how to glorify GOD, and expreſs our Gratitude to *CHRIST*. But, till it has accompliſhed the fore-mentioned End, it thunders Vengeance; it flaſhes Terror; it is, as *Moſes* ſpeaks, *a fiery Law* *.

And is it, my dear *Theron*, a fiery Law? What then ſhall We do, without that meritorious Obedience of the REDEEMER; which is, to the guilty Soul, *as the Cold of Snow in the Time of Harveſt* †.—Is it a Law, which *worketh Wrath?* Then let it endear to our Affections that ineſtimably precious Goſpel, which *preacheth Peace by JESUS CHRIST* ‡.—Is it *the Miniſtration of Condemnation* ‖? O! let it quicken our Flight to that All-gracious SURETY, who was condemned at *Pilate*'s Bar, that we may be acquitted at GOD's Tribunal.

To

* *Fiery Law*, Deut. xxxiii. 2. I dare not affirm, that this is the exact Import of the Original, nor do I preſume to determine the preciſe Signification of a Phraſe, ſo remarkably difficult. But as this is our received Verſion; as it ſuggeſts a very *uſeful* Truth; and a Truth, which, in the preſent Age, is peculiarly *needful* to be inculcated; I am inclined to acquieſce in the common Rendering.

† Prov. xxv. 13. ‡ Acts x. 36. ‖ 2 Cor. iii. 19.

To all this agrees our celebrated *Milton*. Whoſe Divinity on this Subject at leaſt, is as faultleſs, as his Poetry is matchleſs. You will give me Leave to quote a few of his beautiful Lines. Which *recapitulate*, as it were, the whole preceding Converſation: and, while they recapitulate the Converſation, *confirm* the Doctrine. This will make you ſome Amends, for my late tedious Harangue. This will tip the Lead with Gold.

So Law appears imperfect; and but giv'n
With Purpoſe to reſign them, in full Time,
Up to a better Cov'nant; diſciplin'd
From ſhadowy Types to Truth; from Fleſh to Spirit;
From Impoſition of ſtrict Laws, to free
Acceptance of large Grace; from ſervile Fear,
To filial; Works of Law, to Works of Faith *.

* Book XII. 300.

DIALOGUE X.

ASPASIO.

AGAIN, *Theron!* Muſt we never lay aſide the Weapons of Controverſy?— You put me in mind of the reſolute *Athenian*; who, having fought with diſtinguiſhed Bravery on the Field of *Marathon*, purſued the vanquiſhed *Perſians* to their Fleet. At that very Inſtant, a Galley full of the Enemies Troops, was putting off to Sea. Determined, if poſſible, to prevent their Eſcape, He laid hold on the Veſſel with his Right-hand. Which was no ſooner fixed, than chopped off by the Sailors. The Warrior, not at all diſcouraged, ſeized it with his Left. When that alſo was cut away, He faſtened his Teeth in its Side; and never quitted his Gripe, till He reſigned his Breath *.

Ther.

* The *Athenian*'s Name was *Cynægyrus*. The Author, who relates this extraordinary Story, is *Juſtin*. If the Reader ſhould think it a *Rhodomontade*, I believe, He will not judge amiſs. And I promiſe myſelf, the ſame good Senſe will enable Him to diſtinguiſh, between what is hinted by way of *Pleaſantry*, and what is urged by way of Argument.

Ther. I have been reconſidering the Caſe of *imputed Righteouſneſs*; and am by no means ſatisfied, as to the Propriety of the Phraſe, or the Truth of the Doctrine; eſpecially, in the Senſe which You eſpouſe.—Objections ariſe, more ſubſtantial and weighty, than any that have hitherto been urged. And which, if I miſtake not, You will find it a more difficult Taſk to anſwer.

Aſp. I muſt do my beſt. And if my beſt Attempts prove unſucceſsful, I ſhall ſay with the gallant *Iphicrates*, when overpowered by the Eloquence of his Antagoniſt; "My Adverſary is the better "Actor, but mine is the better Play."

I ſay *better*—For to You, *Theron*, I will freely own, what to another Perſon I ſhould not be ſo forward to diſcloſe; That I receive no Comfort, but from the habitual Belief, and daily Application of this precious Doctrine.—Whenever I read the moſt correct and elaborate Writings, which proceed in the contrary Strain, I feel my Spirits heavy; I find my Proſpects gloomy; and not one Ray of Conſolation gleams upon my Mind. Whereas, *much meaner* Compoſitions, which breathe the Savour of this evangelical Unction, ſeldom fail to quicken my Hopes; to brighten my Views; and put into my Mouth that piouſly alert Profeſſion of the Pſalmiſt, *I will run the Way of thy Commandments, now Thou haſt ſet my Heart at liberty* *.—Though I am far from laying any conſiderable Streſs upon this Obſervation; farther ſtill from advancing it into the Place of an Argument; yet I may be permitted to mention it, in the Confidence and Familiarity of Friendſhip.

Ther.

* Pſal. cxix. 32.

Ther. An Opinion delivered with ſo much Modeſty, and ſo nearly connected with my *Aſpaſio's* Comfort, has doubtleſs a Claim to my ſerious Attention. Otherwiſe, it might poſſibly provoke my Raillery. For, You muſt know, I am no great Admirer of inward Feelings. I cannot think them a very ſolid Method of demonſtrating your Point. It muſt be inforced by better Reaſons, if you would gain it Acceſs to *my* Heart.

We muſt place, You ſay, a Dependence upon the *LORD JESUS CHRIST*, in all that He has *done* and *ſuffered*. What HE has done and ſuffered, You add, is our only juſtifying Righteouſneſs: and, to place our Dependence on it, is the only Way to receive Pardon of Sins; the only Way to inherit eternal Life.

Aſp. I have ſaid it, *Theron*, and I abide by it. This being the Righteouſneſs of GOD, is—

Ther. Give me Leave, before You proceed farther, to propoſe a Query. Does the Righteouſneſs of GOD ſignify the active and paſſive Obedience of *CHRIST?*

Aſp. Righteouſneſs is a Conformity to the Law, in Heart, and in Life. As the SON of GOD voluntarily made Himſelf ſubject to the Law; perfectly fulfilled its Precepts; and ſuffered to the utmoſt its Penalty; this, I ſhould imagine, furniſhes Us with the *trueſt* and *nobleſt* Signification of the Phraſe.

Ther. What, if I or Others ſhould imagine quite the Reverſe?

Aſp. I thank my Friend for his Admonition. It is indeed taking too much upon me, to ſuppoſe, that *my bare* Imagination ſhould paſs for Orthodoxy

and Truth.—But is there nothing weighty in the Reaſon, which I have alledged? Was there no Righteouſneſs in our LORD's moſt free Submiſſion to the Commands of the Law, and in his perſevering Performance of all holy Duties? Was there no Righteouſneſs in the conſummate Excellency of his Nature, his Temper, his Converſation? No Righteouſneſs in the matchleſs Perfection of his Acting, his Abſtaining *, his Suffering? Nay; was not this Obedience, in the moſt plain and full Senſe of the Expreſſion, *The Righteouſneſs of GOD?* Did it not, in every Senſe of the Expreſſion, and in every View of the Subject, anſwer the exalted Character? Being, as a maſterly Critic explains the Phraſe, "A Righteouſneſs deviſed by GOD "the FATHER, from all Eternity; wrought "out by GOD the SON, in the Perſon of "*JESUS CHRIST*; applied by GOD the "HOLY GHOST, to the Sinner's Soul."

Ther. This Doctrine of yours, if I rightly underſtand it, would make Remiſſion of Sins but one *half* of our Juſtification; and ſomething elſe neceſſary, in order to Life eternal. Which is juſt as rational, as to ſuppoſe, That though one Cauſe may expel Darkneſs, another muſt ſupervene, in order to introduce Light.

Aſp. The Nature of Juſtification, and the Nature of Condemnation, are two *Oppoſites*, which will mutually illuſtrate each other.—What is implied in the Condemnation of a Sinner? He forfeits eternal Life, and is doomed to eternal Death.—What is included

* Alluding to the Summary of moral Duties, given Us by *Epictetus*, in that well-known Adagy, Ανεχου και απεχου.

included in the Juſtification of a Sinner? It ſuperſedes his Obligation to Puniſhment, and inveſts Him with a Title to Happineſs. *Both* which are procured by *CHRIST*'s Mediation in our Behalf; and *both* take place, when we are united to that Divine HEAD.—We ſuppoſe, therefore, a Difference between the Benefits; but have no Notion of deriving them from two different Sources. We aſcribe them both to one and the ſame All-ſufficient Cauſe, *JESUS CHRIST the righteous.*

Your Compariſon, though intended to overthrow, I think, fully eſtabliſhes the Sentiment.—When yonder bright Orb makes his firſt Appearance in the Eaſt, what Effects are produced? The Shades of Night are diſperſed, and the Light of Day is diffuſed.—To what are they owing? Each to a ſeparate, or both to the ſame Origin? Every one's Experience will anſwer the Queſtion. Thus, when the Author of Salvation is manifeſted in the Soul, He brings *at once* Pardon and Acceptance. Both which conſtitute the *Healing* * of the Nations; and both ſeem neceſſary to complete the Bleſſing of Juſtification.

To illuſtrate this Point, We will ſuppoſe *Adam*, continuing in Innocence, and perſevering in Obedience. We will ſuppoſe Him come to the laſt Period of his Abode on Earth; appearing before the SUPREME JUDGE, as a Candidate for eternal Life. How would his Sentence run? "Thou "haſt been a Rebel; but infinite Mercy forgives "Thee." Would it not rather proceed in this Manner? "Thou art perfectly righteous; Thou "haſt been completely obedient; therefore, infi-

"nite

* Mal. iv. 2.

"nite Fidelity rewards Thee." Now, how could *CHRIST bruiſe the Serpent's Head?* How remedy the direful Effects of the Fall, and reſtore the Happineſs loſt by *Adam*; if He did not both take away our Guilt, and put Us in Poſſeſſion of a perfect Righteouſneſs?

Ther. This, I know, is the fine-ſpun Theory of your ſyſtematic Divines. But where is their *Warrant* from Scripture? By what Authority do they introduce ſuch ſubtle Diſtinctions?

Aſp. I cannot think the Diſtinction ſo ſubtle, or the Theory ſo finely ſpun. To be releaſed from the damnatory Sentence, is one Thing; to be treated as a righteous Perſon, is evidently another.—*Abſalom* was pardoned, when He received a Permiſſion to remove from *Geſhur*, and dwell at *Jeruſalem*. But this was very different from the Recommencement of filial Intercourſe, and parental Endearment *. A Rebel may be *exempted* from the capital Puniſhment, which his traiterous Practices deſerve; without being *reſtored* to the Dignity of his former State, or the Rights of a loyal Subject. In Chriſtianity likewiſe, to be freed from the Charge of Guilt, and to be regarded as righteous Perſons, are two ſeveral Bleſſings; really diſtinct in themſelves, often diſtinguiſhed in Scripture, though always included in the very Eſſence of Juſtification.

Ther. Where are they diſtinguiſhed? In what Texts of Scripture? This is what I called for—your ſcriptural Warrant.

Aſp. What think You of *Job's* Reply to his cenſorious Friends? *GOD forbid, that I ſhould juſtify You.*

* 2 Sam. xiv. 24.

You *! That He *forgave* them, there is no Doubt. Yet he could not *juſtify* them: could not allow their Reflections to be equitable, or their Behaviour charitable.

What think You of *Solomon*'s Supplication? *Then hear Thou in Heaven, and do, and judge thy Servants; condemning the Wicked, to bring his Way upon his Head; and juſtifying the Righteous, to give Him according to his Righteouſneſs* †. To condemn, in this Paſſage, evidently ſignifies to pronounce guilty, and obnoxious to Puniſhment. By Parity of Reaſon, to *juſtify* muſt denote to pronounce righteous, and intitled to Happineſs.

What ſays *Solomon*'s Father? *Enter not into Judgment with thy Servant, O LORD! For, in thy Sight, ſhall no Man living be juſtified* ‡. A Man might be *pardoned*, if judged according to the Tenour of his own Obedience. But no Man could be *declared righteous*, in conſequence of ſuch a Tryal: this, before the ſupreme Tribunal, were abſolutely and univerſally impoſſible.

From all which Paſſages I conclude; That, to be accounted righteous, is different from, is ſuperior to, the bare Remiſſion of Sin. Is as our Church expreſſes it, *Of unjuſt to be made juſt before GOD.*

* *Job* xxvii. 5. *Vos juſtos in Causâ veſtra adverſus me pronuntiem.* SCHULT. See the Word צדיקי *Iſai.* l. 8. *Bengelius* has, with his uſual Solidity and Correctneſs, explained the Meaning of δικαιοῦσθαι. *Eſt autem Significatus ille valde prægnans; ut quam late patet* Peccatum *cum* Reatu & Vitio, *tam late ex adverſo pateat* Juſtitia. *Denotans omne id, quo Homo fit, & judicetur, & dicatur* juſtus.

† 1 Kings viii. 32. ‡ Pſal. cxliii. 2. See alſo Pſal. li. 6. *Heb. Bib.*

Ther. All theſe Inſtances are ſelected from the *Old* Teſtament. The *New*, if I miſtake not, ſpeaks another Language. Conſider the Caſe of the penitent *Publican*. What does He requeſt? *GOD be merciful to me a Sinner!* What does He obtain? *He went down to his Houſe juſtified* *. If then the Petition and the Grant may be deemed correſpondent, Pardon and Juſtification muſt be reckoned equivalent.

Aſp. The Old and the New Teſtament are, in their Style and Contents, exactly correſpondent. *Echo*, in yonder Cloyſters, does not more punctually reverberate the Speaker's Voice, than thoſe divine Books harmonize with each other.

It will not follow, from the *Publican*'s Requeſt and the *Publican*'s Bleſſing, That Pardon and Juſtification are the ſame. Only, That GOD's Bounty frequently *exceeds* our Prayers, and is larger than our Expectations. Or, that the Bleſſing which was implored, and the Bleſſing which was vouchſafed, are inſeparably connected, and always accompany each other.

That they are not the ſame, will appear from an Inſtance recorded in the New Teſtament. The Inſtance I mean, of *CHRIST* and *Barabbas*.—Of *Barabbas* the Judge might properly ſay; "He is a "notorious Malefactor. But I acquit Him. I "releaſe Him." This is Pardon.—Of *CHRIST* the Judge actually ſaid; *I find no Fault at all in Him.* To which the Centurion added; *Certainly this was a righteous Man.* This is Juſtification.

What I am aſſerting, will more evidently appear, from that gracious Proclamation, made by the ſacred

* Luke xviii. 13, 14.

ered Herald; *Be it known unto You, Men and Brethren, that through this Man is preached unto You the Forgiveneſs of Sins: and by Him, all that believe, are* JUSTIFIED *from all Things.* Did the captive *Grecians* leap for Joy, did they rend the very Air with their Shouts? When the Cryer, by Command of the *Roman* General, proclaimed Liberty —wiſhed for Liberty to them all? And ſhall not our Hearts ſpring with Tranſport and Gratitude, when We hear this Meſſage of Mercy from the Ambaſſador of Heaven! Let Us dwell upon it, a Moment. It may drop Balm on our Conſciences, while it yields Argument for our Diſpute.

" *Through this* SAVIOUR, by his Order and " in his Name, I propoſe to your Acceptance the " free, the full, the abſolute Forgiveneſs of all " your Sins. By which You ſhall be diſcharged " from Guilt; delivered from Puniſhment; and " reſcued from all the dreadful Conſequences of " your Iniquities."—Ineſtimable Grant! Yet, in the laſt Clauſe, it proceeds to a Patent of Honour. —" *Through this JESUS*, who is both GOD " and *Man*, who was dead and is alive for ever- " more, *all that believe are* JUSTIFIED. The Ver- " dict runs in their Favour. They are pronounced " righteous in open Court. Juſtice itſelf declares, " They are *without Spot and blameleſs.*"

Ther. If this be Juſtification, it is a high Privilege indeed. Too high, methinks, for ſinful Man to expect.

Aſp. It is too high, infinitely too high, for ſinful Man to attain by any Obedience of his own. But not too high for the Righteouſneſs of *CHRIST* to procure, nor for the Grace of GOD to confer.

—I appeal to yourſelf, whether this is not the cuſtomary and obvious Signification of the Word. When a Criminal has been found guilty, but is freed from Puniſhment, We may ſay of ſuch a One, "He is pardoned;" We never ſay, "He "is juſtified." Then only a Perſon is juſtified, when his Righteouſneſs is made clear as the Light.

This the very Genius of our Language implies, and with this the Doctrine of the Apoſtle accords. St. *Paul* mentions *A Juſtification of Life*. Not barely an Exemption from the Sentence of Death; but ſuch a Juſtification, as gives *a Title* * to the Reward of Life. The Words are very emphatical. We ſhall injure the Dignity of their Meaning, if We underſtand them in a more contracted Senſe.—Towards the Cloſe of the ſame Chapter, We have another Paſſage, rich with Conſolation, and full to our Purpoſe. *Grace reigneth through Righteouſneſs unto eternal Life* †. Here, is pointed out the *prime Source* of all our Bleſſings, infinitely free and triumphant Grace: The *meritorious Cauſe*, not any Works of Man, not any Qualifications of our own, but the perfect Righteouſneſs of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST:* The *Effect* or *End* of all; which is,

* *Rom.* v. 18. Δικαιωσις ζωης *eſt Declaratio divina illa, qua Peccator, Mortis reus, Vitæ adjudicatur,* idque Jure. BENGEL. This I take to be the preciſe Meaning of Juſtification. Pardon is founded upon Clemency in the Judge: Juſtification upon Righteouſneſs in the Party arraigned. Where there is any, though it be but the leaſt Fault, an upright *earthly* Judge cannot juſtify. Much leſs will the infinitely righteous Judge of Quick and Dead. But Sinners having, in the Obedience of *CHRIST*, a *moſt perfect* Righteouſneſs, are juſtified, *idque jure*, and that on Principles of Equity.

† Rom. v. 21.

is, not barely an Abſolution from Guilt, but an Inſtatement in Life; a Life of holy Communion with GOD in this World, to be crowned with an eternal Fruition of Him in another.

Accordingly, eternal Life is called *The Hope*, not of Forgiveneſs, but of *Righteouſneſs* *. And it is beſtowed, not barely becauſe of Abſolution, but *becauſe of Righteouſneſs* †.—I think, therefore, We have very ſufficient Reaſon to diſtinguiſh, between the *Pardon* which delivers from Hell, and the *Righteouſneſs* which intitles to Heaven. The former does by no means conſtitute the latter; but is connected with it, as a Link in the ſame Chain; or included in it, as Part of the ſame Whole—that important and glorious Whole, JUSTIFICATION! Which, to every poor Sinner, who knows his undone Condition, muſt be incomparably more valuable, than ten thouſand Worlds.

Ther. Admitting your Diſtinction to be proper; Is not the Death of *CHRIST*, ſufficient of *itſelf* to obtain, both our full Pardon, and our final Happineſs?

Aſp. Since my Friend has ſtarted the Queſtion, I may venture, with all Reverence to the divine Counſels, to anſwer in the Negative: it being neceſſary, that the REDEEMER of Men ſhould *obey*, as well as *ſuffer*, in their Stead.—For this We have the Teſtimony of our Church; "It had "not been enough to be delivered by his Death "from Sin, except by his Reſurrection We had "been endowed with Righteouſneſs."—For this We have the Authority of our LORD; *This*

* Gal. v. 5. † Rom. viii. 10.

Commandment, ſays He, *have I received of my FATHER, that I ſhould lay down my Life* *. *Thus it becometh Us*, adds He in another Place, *to fulfil all Righteouſneſs* †.—To all which his Apoſtle ſubjoins; that, if We *reign in Life*, it muſt be, not only through thoſe Sufferings which expiate, but alſo *through* that *Righteouſneſs* ‡ which merits.

Ther. Our LORD's Teſtimony relates only to a *poſitive* Inſtitution, and is quite foreign to your Purpoſe.—I have often been diſguſted at ſuch ſtrained Applications of Scripture. The Partizans of a Syſtem wreſt the ſacred Book. They deal with divine Truth, as the Tyrant *Procruſtes* ſerved thoſe unhappy Creatures, who fell into his mercileſs Hands. Is a Text too ſhort, to ſuit their Deſign? Our *Procruſtean* Expoſitors can ſtretch it on the Rack, and lengthen its Senſe. Is it too full, to conſiſt with their Scheme? They can lop off a Limb, ſecrete a Sentence, or contract the Meaning.—Is this to reverence the great GOD? Is this to treat reſpectfully his holy Word?

Aſp. I have been grieved, I aſſure You, and diſguſted at this Practice, as well as Yourſelf. A Practice, not only very irreverent, but very injudicious alſo. It really prejudices the Cauſe, it it would unfairly recommend. Such a Support is like *a broken Tooth, or a Foot out of joint* ‖; not only unſerviceable, but hurtful; an Obſtruction, rather than a Furtherance.—However, I am not conſcious of committing any Violence on this Paſſage, or of forcing it into my Service. The Circumſtance You object, rather ſtrengthens, than invalidates

* John x. 18. † Matt. iii. 15. ‡ Rom. v. 17.
‖ Prov. xxv. 19.

invalidates the Concluſion. If it was ſo requiſite for our bleſſed MEDIATOR, to obſerve a *poſitive* and temporary Inſtitution; how much more neceſſary, to fulfil thoſe *moral* Precepts, whoſe Obligation is unalterable and everlaſting? At his Baptiſm, He obſerved the former; as a Token or Earneſt, that through his whole Life, He would fulfil the latter *.

Beſides; it ſhould be conſidered, Whether *CHRIST*'s Sufferings were a complete Satisfaction to the Law? Complete they were, with regard to the *Penalty*, not with regard to the *Precept*. A Diſtinction obvious and weighty. From whence ariſes the following Argument; which, for *once*, You will allow me to propoſe in the logical Form.

By what alone the Law was not ſatisfied; by that alone Sinners could not be juſtified:

By *CHRIST*'s Sufferings alone, the Law was not ſatisfied:

Therefore, by *CHRIST*'s Sufferings alone, Sinners could not be juſtified.

But when We join the active with the paſſive Obedience of our LORD; when We add to both, the perfect Sanctity of his Nature; how does our Juſtification ſtand firm, in the *fulleſt* Senſe of the Word! We have all that the Law demands, both for our Exemption from the Curſe, and as a Title to the Bleſſing.

Ther. Does not the Scripture aſcribe the Whole of our Salvation to the Death of *CHRIST*? Delivering it, as a never to be forgotten Maxim in

* Πασαν δικαιοσυνην, *Omnes Juſtitiæ Partes*, atque adeo hanc quoque, cæterarum majorum Arrhabonem.

BENGEL.

Chriſtianity; That *We have Redemption through his Blood* *: *are brought near through the Blood of CHRIST* †: nay, that *We are juſtified* (the very Point under Debate) *through his Blood* ‡.—Would the inſpired Writer have aſſigned theſe various Bleſſings to this *one* Cauſe; if it had been a Price inadequate to the Purchaſe, or a Means inſufficient to accompliſh the End?

Aſp. This *Part* of our LORD's meritorious Humiliation, is, by a very uſual Figure, put for the *Whole*. The Death of *CHRIST* includes, not only his Sufferings, but his Obedience. The Shedding of his precious Blood, was at once the grand Inſtance of his Suffering, and the finiſhing Act of his Obedience. In this View it is conſidered, and thus it is interpreted, by his own Ambaſſador. Who, ſpeaking of his Divine MASTER, ſays, *He was* obedient *unto Death, even the Death of the Croſs* ‖.

By the ſame Figure, Faith is ſometimes ſaid to be a lively influential Perſuaſion, *That CHRIST died for our Sins* §. At other Times, it is repreſented as a firm practical Belief, That *GOD hath raiſed Him from the Dead* ¶. Neither of which can, without the utmoſt Contrariety to the Analogy of Scripture, be taken in the *excluſive* Senſe. Each Act muſt be underſtood, not ſeparately, but jointly. Each

* Eph. i. 7. † Eph. ii. 13. ‡ Rom. v. 9.

‖ *Phil.* ii. 8. The Original is μεχρι θανατου *uſque ad*. Not only *in* Death, but through his whole Life, *even unto* Death. That ſame Principle of Duty to GOD, which influenced our SAVIOUR's Life, carried Him on to the laſt and greateſt Act of Obedience, his voluntary Submiſſion to Death.

§ 1 Cor. xv. 3. ¶ Rom. x. 9.

Each as implying both, or reciprocally inferring one another.

In like manner, when the Scripture aſcribes our Juſtification to the Death of *CHRIST*; We are not to think, that it would *ſet aſide*, but *imply* his Obedience. It is not becauſe his active Obedience has no Concern, in procuring the Bleſſing; but becauſe his bitter Paſſion was the moſt conſpicuous, and the completing Stage of his ever-glorious Undertaking. Then, and not till then, He could truly ſay; *FATHER, I have finiſhed the Work, Thou gaveſt me to do* *.

Ther. According to your Account then, it ſhould be poſſible for a Man to have all his Sins pardoned, yet not attain to *complete* Juſtification. Which is as contrary to ſound Senſe, and true Divinity, as to imagine, that Crookedneſs may be removed, and the Object not become ſtraight.

Aſp. No, *Theron.* I only apprehend, that Pardon does by no Means exhauſt the *whole* Nature of Juſtification. For which I have a better Warrant than my own Apprehenſion. *He was delivered, for our Sins, and roſe again for our Juſtification.* "O "moſt comfortable Word, ſaith our Church, ever- "more to be borne in Remembrance! He died to "put away Sin, *this is one Part of Juſtification*; "He roſe again to endow Us with Righteouſ- "neſs †." *This is the other Part.*

According to my Account, it is impoſſible, that the active and paſſive Obedience of our REDEEMER ſhould be disjoined. To whomſoever the one is imputed, from Him the other is not with-

* John xvii. 4.

† For this, and the preceding Quotation, ſee *Our Homily on the Reſurrection.*

with-held. They were *undivided in CHRIST* the illuſtrious Head; and they are undivided in their Application to his myſtical Body. As *CHRIST* in ſuffering obeyed, and in obeying ſuffered; ſo, whoever receives *CHRIST* as an Atonement, receives Him alſo as a Righteouſneſs.

This has been obſerved before; and if this be real Fact, what an *ineſtimably precious* Gift, is the Gift of *CHRIST!* Never was the moſt ſovereign Remedy, ſo admirably ſuited to any Malady, as this is adapted to our neceſſitous and miſerable State. In HIM may We be found, living and dying! How ſafe, how happy then!—Let me not weary your Patience, if I repeat a Paſſage from our excellent Dr. *Lightfoot*. Which, though artleſs and remarkably ſimple, has very much affected my Mind; and, I hope, will leave ſome valuable Impreſſion on my Friend's. "Juſtification, ſays that "judicious Divine, is a Man's being intereſted "in all *CHRIST*'s Righteouſneſs. And if any "Thing is to be longed for, ſure that is, to be in-"tereſted in *all CHRIST*'s Righteouſneſs."

Ther. You don't weary my Patience; neither do You ſatisfy my Doubts. For You take no notice of the *Abſurdity* objected, and the Compariſon which enforces it.

Aſp. Your Compariſon, my dear Friend, is not founded on a *parallel* Caſe. Neither Senſe, nor Philoſophy find a Medium, between the Removal of Crookedneſs, and the Succeſſion of Straightneſs. But Reaſon diſcerns an *apparent*, and Revelation maintains an *important* Difference, between the Pardon of Sin, and a Title to Life. This has already been proved from Scripture; and is, to me at leaſt, evi-

dent from the very Nature of Things. If a King, in favour of ſome condemned Malefactor, revoke the Sentence of Death; this is one very conſiderable Act of Clemency. But if He pleaſes to make the pardoned Criminal, a *Partaker* of his Kingdom, or an Heir of his Crown; this ſurely is a new, and a much higher Inſtance of royal Bounty.

Since You inſiſt upon a *Similitude*, the Word of GOD, which always ſpeaks with conſummate Propriety, will furniſh Us with one. *Zechariah* illuſtrates the Doctrine of Juſtification. He repreſents the Sinner by a Perſon arrayed in *filthy Garments*. His Pardon is deſcribed by *taking away* this ſordid Apparel. By which Benefit, He ceaſes to be defiled; yet is He not hereby clothed; yet is He not hereby juſtified. This is an additional Bleſſing; ſignified by putting on *Change of Raiment* *, and wearing beautiful Robes.—Here, the Circumſtances tally. The two conſtituent Parts of Juſtification, are ſeverally diſplayed, and ſtrongly marked. Here We have the Removal of Filth, and the Acceſſion of Beauty; that which frees Us from being abhorred, and that which renders Us accepted. Which, though diſtinguiſhable in themſelves, and diſtinguiſhed by the ſacred Writer, are always united in the divine Donation.

After all, I readily acknowledge, that the Clemency of an earthly Sovereign, the Proceedings of an earthly Tribunal, or the Generoſity of an earthly Benefactor, are but partial and inadequate Repreſentations of this wonderful Affair. Becauſe, in the Caſe of juſtifying a Sinner, all is abſolutely free,

* Zech. iii. 3, 4, 5.

free, yet all is ſtrictly due: *abſolutely free*, with reſpect to unworthy Man: *ſtrictly due*, with regard to the Merits of *CHRIST*.

Ther. Due to CHRIST—This Notion, I ſuppoſe, is founded upon a Covenant; a *chimerical* Covenant, that *CHRIST* would take upon Him the Obedience required from Man, of which there is not the leaſt Intimation in holy Scripture.

Aſp. That *CHRIST* undertook every Thing neceſſary, to redeem *loſt Sinners* from Death and Hell; every Thing neceſſary, to procure for *attainted Rebels* a Title to Life and Glory; this cannot be reckoned chimerical. This muſt be as real, as that loſt Sinners are redeemed, or attainted Rebels reſtored. Every Proof of the one, proves and eſtabliſhes the other. This is what We call a *Covenant*; and, from its benign Nature, THE COVENANT OF GRACE.

Without *undertaking* this, I ſee not how our LORD could ſuſtain the Character of a SURETY; nor, without *fulfilling* it, how He could execute the Office of a REDEEMER.—And I believe, You yourſelf will be at a loſs to ſhew, with what Kind of Juſtice the Eternal FATHER could *lay* * our Iniquities on the innocent *JESUS*, unleſs He had *conſented* to be anſwerable for our Guilt.

Ther. This is no Anſwer to my Objection. I ſaid —and it has been aſſerted by a very eminent and able Pen—that there is no Intimation of any ſuch Covenant in the whole Scriptures.

Aſp. What then can be the Meaning of thoſe remarkable Words, in the Prophecy of *Zechariah?* The

* Iſai. liii. 6.

The Counſel of Peace ſhall be between them both *. Here, I think, the Covenant is mentioned, and the Parties are ſpecified.—*The Counſel of Peace*, if I miſtake

* *Zech.* vi. 12, 13. Theſe two Verſes contain a brief, but very fine Deſcription of the REDEEMER; of his Perſon, his Office, and his Glory; together with the all-gracious Cauſe, and ever-bleſſed Fruit of our Redemption.

His *Perſon:* He is *the Man*; or, as the *Hebrew* imports, the *real*, but at the ſame Time, the *illuſtrious* Man. —*Whoſe Name is the BRANCH*; being the new Origin of a new Race; the Father of a ſpiritual Seed, who are Children, not of the Fleſh, but of the Promiſe.—A Branch that ſhall ſpring, not from a common Root, not from any human Planting, but מתחתיו *from under Himſelf*; being born of a pure Virgin, and by the Power of his own SPIRIT, He ſhall be both Stock and Stem to Himſelf.

His *Office:* It is to *build the Temple*, the Church of the Elect; which is the Houſe of the living GOD. In which He dwells, and by Whom He is worſhipped. Laying the Foundation of this ſpiritual Edifice in his Croſs, and cementing it with his Blood.—Which He ſhall rule as a *King*, after having redeemed it as a *Prieſt*; uniting the ſacerdotal Cenſer with the regal Diadem, and being *a Prieſt upon his Throne*. Hence proceeds his *Glory:* For, He *ſtands* not, like other Prieſts, offering daily the ſame Oblations; but having, by one Sacrifice, obtained eternal Redemption for Us, is *ſet* down at the Right-hand of the MAJESTY on High.

What is the *Cauſe* of theſe great Events? What, but that moſt ſacred and auguſt Convention, *the Council of Peace?* Which was ſettled *between them both*; between the LORD JEHOVAH on one Hand, and the Man whoſe Name is the *BRANCH* on the other.—Called a *Council*, from the entire Conſent, which actuated each Party; and the tranſcendent Wiſdom, diſplayed in the whole Scheme.—The Council of *Peace*, becauſe of its ſovereign Efficacy, to make Peace with an offended GOD, Peace in the accuſing Conſcience, Peace among People of jarring Tempers and diſcordant Principles.

take not, ſignifies the myſterious and unſearchable Contrivance, formed for the Recovery of ruined Man.—Formed and carried into Execution, by the LORD Almighty, or GOD the FATHER; and that illuſtrious Perſon, who is to *build the Temple, and bear the Glory.* A Character, which None can claim; a Taſk, to which None is equal; but the bleſſed *JESUS* only.

In *Pſalm* the xlth, the *Conditions* of the Covenant are circumſtantially recorded. Which were the Incarnation, Obedience, and Death of the eternal SON: *A* Body *haſt Thou prepared me. Lo! I come to* do *thy Will*; and to *offer one Sacrifice for Sin* *.—The *Accompliſhment* of theſe Conditions, is alledged and pleaded by our great MEDIATOR, in the Introduction to his laſt ſolemn Prayer †. What He implores, in the Proceſs of his Supplications, may be looked upon as the *Recompence* ‡, decreed Him by the FATHER, and ſtipulated in this magnificent Treaty.—*Implores*, did I ſay? 'Tis very obſervable, that our LORD makes a *Demand*, rather than a *Requeſt*. The Expreſſion is not ερωτω, but θελω ‖. A Word of Authority, not of Supplication. He claims what, by the FATHER's Engagement, and by his own Obedience, was become his unqueſtionable Right.

Here are the Parties of the Covenant; the Conditions of the Covenant; the Performance of the Covenant; and the Reward, which, by virtue of ſuch Per-

* Heb. x. 5, 7, 12. † John xvii.

‡ This Recompence is ſpecified and promiſed, in another authentic Copy of the ſame grand Treaty, regiſtered *Iſai.* xlix. 1—6.

‖ Not I *beg*, but I *will*. John xvii. 24. *Sic volo, ſic jubeo.*

Performance, is merited, is claimable, is due. All this, I ſhould imagine, amounts to an *Intimation*, and ſomewhat *more* than an Intimation of the Covenant.

Ther. This You call the Covenant of Grace: But if We are juſtified by *CHRIST*'s fulfilling of the Law, We are juſtified by Works. So that, before You can ſtrike out ſuch a Way of Salvation, You muſt *contradict* Yourſelf: And, what is more adventurous, You muſt aboliſh that fundamental Principle of the Goſpel; *By the Works of the Law, ſhall no Fleſh be juſtified.*

Aſp. We *are*, I grant it, juſtified by Works. But whoſe? The Works of *CHRIST*, not our own. —This is very far from contradicting Ourſelves; equally far is it from aboliſhing, what You call a "Principle of the Goſpel." Which, though an undeniable Truth, is not an evangelical Doctrine. Becauſe, it only ſhews Us our miſerable State, and the utter Impoſſibility of relieving Ourſelves. Whereas, nothing is *genuine* Goſpel *, but what ſpeaks Comfort, and adminiſters Recovery.

Between the Covenant of Works, and the Covenant of Grace, this, I apprehend, is the Difference. In the former, Man was to obtain eternal Life by his *perſonal* Obedience. By the latter, the Obedience of *his Surety* is accepted, inſtead of his own. The Righteouſneſs required by both, is not *ſincere*, but *complete*; not proportioned to the Abilities of fallen Man, but to the Purity of the Law, and the Majeſty of the LAWGIVER.—By this Means, the

* The *Goſpel*, preciſely conſidered, and as it ſtands in Contradiſtinction to the *Law*, is the Doctrine of Pardon and Life through *JESUS CHRIST*; through his Satisfaction and Righteouſneſs, freely preſented to loſt Sinners, and freely to be applied for their Salvation.

the Glory of GOD as an awful Sovereign, and the Glory of his Law as an inviolable System, are entirely preserved and illustriously displayed. The Salvation of Sinners, neither clashes with the Truth, nor interferes with the Justice of the Supreme LEGISLATOR. On the contrary, it becomes a *faithful* and *just* * Procedure of the most High GOD, to justify *Him that believeth on JESUS.*

Ther. When You make this Difference between the two Covenants, where is your Authority from Scripture? Which of the sacred Writers have taught Us, that, though one demanded personal, the other is content with *vicarious* Obedience?

Asp. Which?—*The first Three.* The most eminent Historian; the most enraptured Poet; and the most zealous Preacher. I need not inform You, that I mean *Moses*, *David*, and *Paul.*

The Testimony of *David* has already been recited.—*Moses* gives Us a concise, but very instructive Account of the second Covenant. With *Whom*, according to his Representation, was it made? Not with *Adam*, or any of his Posterity; but with the *LORD JESUS CHRIST*, in the Room and Stead of both. None of the Articles are proposed to a poor, impotent, ruined Creature. It is not a Law of Commandments, but a free Promise only, that must afford Relief in a fallen State. Therefore the whole Burden is consigned over to the interposing SAVIOUR, significantly described by *the Seed of the Woman.* It is not said, "Thy best Endeavours, O *Adam*, thy true Repentance and sincere "Obedience, shall retrieve this fatal Miscarriage; "but, *the Seed of the Woman shall bruise the Serpent's Head.*

* 1 John i. 9.

" *Head* *. The SON of the MOST HIGH, " by taking thy Nature, submitting to thy Obli- " gations, and suffering Death for thy Sins, HE, " even HE shall fully repair thy Loss."

CHRIST, We see, undertook to execute the Conditions. *CHRIST* was our Representative in this great Transaction. For which Reason He is styled by St. *Paul*, *The second Man* †, and *the Surety of a better Covenant* ‡.—Our Help being laid upon ONE, that is so mighty; upon ONE, that is so faithful; the Covenant is said to be, *In all Things well ordered and sure* ‖. Admirably well ordered indeed, for the Comfort of the *Christian*, and the Security of his Salvation.—" 'Tis true, may He ar- " gue, I cannot fulfil the Conditions; and 'tis " equally true, that no such Thing is required at " my Hands. The *LORD JESUS CHRIST*, " of his adorably rich Goodness, has performed all " that was conditional §; and has established, for " me and for his People, a *valid Title* to the Pro- " mises ¶, the Privileges, and—

Ther.

* Gen. iii. 15. † 1 Cor. xv. 48. ‡ Heb. vii. 22. ‖ 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.

§ *Witsius*, instead of representing the *Covenant of Grace* as a *chimerical* Thing, most affectionately and charmingly displays its Excellency; *Si quicquam ergo attentissima Consideratione dignum censeri debeat, sane id Fœdus Gratiæ est. Hic Via ostenditur ad meliorem terrestri Paradisum, & ad certiorem stabilioremque Fœlicitatem, eâ quæ Adamus excidit. Hic nova Spes perditis Mortalibus allucet, quæ eo gratior esse debet, quo inexspectatior obvenit. Hic Conditiones offeruntur, quibus æterna Salus annexa est; Conditiones non a Nobis rursus præstandæ, quod Animum despondere faceret; sed ab EO, qui Vitâ non excedet, antequam vere dixerit,* Consummatum est. De Oecon. Lib. II. Cap. i.

¶ Therefore the Apostle uses this remarkable Expression, *Covenants of Promise*, Eph. ii. 12.—*Covenants*, in

Ther. "has thereby released me from all Obliga-
"tion to practical Duty."—Forewel then to our own Obedience. No more Occasion for any Holiness of Life. Nay, the Sluice is opened for an Inundation of Ungodliness.—Fine Divinity truly! Should I not rather say? Downright *Antinomianism!* Hyp. No, my Friend: *CHRIST came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfil* *. He has fulfilled it to the uttermost, in his own Person. He has also merited for Us, those Supplies of the SPIRIT, which alone can enable weak corrupt Creatures, to yield acceptable Obedience.—Though our LORD JESUS died, and was obedient for *the Ungodly*; though He always *finds* Us ungodly, when He justifies Us; yet He never *leaves* his People in this abominable State. On the contrary, He *teaches them*, and by this very Grace of free Justification, *to deny all Ungodliness and worldly Lusts* †.

Pray, let Us consider the Tenour of this Covenant; since You are so very apprehensive of its Consequences.—"*I will put my Laws into their*
"*Minds, and on their Hearts will I write them* ‡.
"They shall discern such a Beauty and Glory in
"my Precepts, as will engage their Desires, and
"win their Affections. So that it shall no longer
"be their *Burden*, but their *Delight*; even their
"Meat

the plural Number. Because, administered at sundry Times, and manifested in diverse Manners. Though the Substance of each was one and the same, namely *CHRIST*.—Covenants, not of mutual Contract, but of absolute *Grace*; because the Blessings were not proposed on the Foot of obligatory Conditions, but by Way of free Grant, or unconditional Promise. *I will* be their GOD; *they shall* be my People. *Jer.* xxxi. 33.

* Matt. v. 17. † Tit. ii. 12. ‡ Heb. viii. 10.

Meat and Drink, to do the Will of their FATHER in Heaven."—This, You will own, is practical Duty, in its most perfect Form. And this is one Benefit of the Covenant; one of the Privileges, purchased by our great MEDIATOR. Now it seems wondrous strange, that the *Purchase* of an Estate for You or me, should be reckoned the sure Means, to *deprive* Us of the Possession, or *debar* Us from the Enjoyment.

How often is this weak Surmise urged as an Argument? All whose Plausibility is owing, to a palpable Mistake, or an egregious Fallacy: to a supposed Separation of Things, which are absolutely inseparable; I mean, our Justification and our Sanctification *.—You are a Philosopher, Theron. Try, if You can separate *Gravity* from the Stone, or *Heat* from the Fire. If these Bodies and their *essential* Properties, if these Causes and their *necessary* Effects, are indissolubly connected; so are a genuine Faith, and a conscientious Obedience. To suppose them disunited, is as contrary to sound Divinity; as it would be contrary to true Philosophy, if You should talk of a burning Substance that has no Warmth, or of a solid Substance that has no Weight.—Never therefore, my dear Friend, repeat this stale Objection; never propagate this

* See *Heb.* xii. 14. 1 *Cor.* i. 30. 1 *Cor.* vi. 11. Where these Blessings walk Hand in Hand; and never *were*, never *will*, never *can* be parted. No more, than the delicious Scents, can be separated from the beautiful Bloom, of the Rose or Carnation. Let the Flower be expanded, and the Fragrance transpires. Let Justification take Place, and, under a Sense of this delightful Privilege, the Heart is purified; the Life is rectified; the whole Man sanctified.

ungrounded.* Clamour, or adopt a Cavil, which is altogether as unphilosophical, as it is anti-evangelical.

Ther. —. This puts me in mind of what *Theodorus* replied to *Philocles*, who was often insinuating, that He preached *licentious* Doctrine; because He enlarged, with peculiar Affiduity, upon Faith in *JESUS CHRIST*; and frequently chose such Texts as, *Believe in the LORD JESUS, and Thou shalt be saved.*

"I preach Salvation by *JESUS CHRIST*; and "give me Leave to ask, Whether You know, what Sal-"vation by *CHRIST* means?"—*Philocles* paused. He began to blush; would have eluded the Question, and declined an Answer.—"No, said *Theodorus*. You ought "permit me to insist upon a Reply. Because, if it be a "*right* one, it will justify me and my Conduct; if it be "a *wrong* one, it will prove, that You blame You know "not what; and have more Reason to inform yourself, "than to censure others."

This disconcerted Him still more. Upon which *Theodorus* proceeded. "Salvation by *CHRIST* means, not "only a Deliverance from the *Guilt*, but also from the "*Power* of Sin; the latter effected by Means of the for-"mer. *HE gave Himself for Us, that*, having rescued "Us from the Damnation of Hell, and restored Us to "the Hope of Heaven, *He might*, by the Faith or be-"lieving Enjoyment of these Blessings, *redeem Us from* "*all Iniquity*."—"Go now, *Philocles*, and tell the "World, that by teaching these Doctrines, I promote "the Cause of Licentiousness. And You will be just as "*rational*, just as *candid*, just as *true*, as if You should "affirm; That, when your House was in Flames, the "*Firemen*, by playing the Engine, and pouring in Wa-"ter, burnt the Building to the Ground, and laid your "Furniture in Ashes."

The same may be said of those Writers, who, to depreciate the Truth as it is in *JESUS*, and to discredit the great Duty of a Sinner, and talk of "a presump-"tuous inactive Reliance on the Blood and Merits of "*CHRIST*." Which is mere Inconsistency. Made up of incompatible Ideas.—A pretended or hypocritical

Ther. We digress from the Point. My principal Objection is not satisfied. I was observing that, according to *your* Manner of stating the Affair, Salvation is no longer free, but founded upon Works.—They are the Works of the Law, though *CHRIST* performs them. To maintain, that We are justified by these Works, is to confound the Difference between the Law and the Gospel.

Aspas. Though We should admit your Premises, We cannot acquiesce in your Conclusion. The same Righteousness, by which We are justified, is both legal and evangelical. *Legal*, in respect to *CHRIST*, who was made under the Law, that He might obey all its Commands. *Evangelical*, in respect to Us, who work not Ourselves, but believe in the great FULFILLER of all Righteousness.—This is much of the same Nature, with that other momentous Distinction in Divinity; Salvation is freely given, yet dearly bought. *Freely given*, with regard to Us; *dearly bought*, with regard to *CHRIST*. So, We are justified *by* Works, if You look forward to our SURETY: We are justified *without* Works, if You cast a retrospective View on Ourselves.

Theron was revolving these Points in his Mind.—*Aspasio*, after a short Interval, renewed the Discourse.—I know not, whether my Friend is yielding to my Arguments, or searching after Objections; deliberating upon a Capitulation, or mustering his Forces for a fresh Sally. However, let

Reliance there may be. But, whenever Reliance is *real*, it cannot be *presumptuous*, because it has GOD's Word for its Warrant; it will not be *inactive*, since it is a Connection with *CHRIST* the living Head.

me take this Opportunity of dropping a Hint, and ſuggeſting a Caution.

The grand Reaſon, which inclines ſome People to reject this comfortable Doctrine, lies concealed, if not in an abſolute Diſbelief of our LORD's eternal Glory and GODHEAD, yet in unſettled Apprehenſions of it, or an habitual Inattention to it.—If our SAVIOUR was not really GOD, as ſome Writers, unhappily miſtaken themſelves, endeavour to perſuade the World; it would be a reaſonable Practice, and entirely conſiſtent with their Scheme, to diſavow the Imputation of his Righteouſneſs. Becauſe, upon ſuch a Suppoſition, his Obedience was no more than bounden Duty; in which there could not be the leaſt Pretence to Merit, and which could be profitable to None but Himſelf.—Whereas, if We verily believe Him to be the incarnate GOD, his Submiſſion to the Law becomes an Act of *voluntary* Humiliation. Which Circumſtance, together with the *tranſcendent* Dignity of his Perſon, render his Obedience, not meritorious only, but inexpreſſibly and *infinitely* meritorious.

As the Blood of *CHRIST* is called GOD's *own Blood* *; ſo the Obedience of *CHRIST* was performed in the Perſon of that adorable MEDIATOR, *who is* GOD *over all* †. He acted through the whole Courſe of his Life, and ſuffered Death at the laſt, not merely as Man, but as GOD-Man; as JEHOVAH-JESUS; IMMANUEL.—Let me entreat You to remember, ever to remember this *all-important* Article of our Faith. And may the bleſſed SPIRIT of Wiſdom give Us an Underſtanding, to know the weighty,

* Acts xx. 28. † Rom. ix. 5.

weighty, the extenſive Influence of ſo glorious a Truth!

Ther. Far be it from me, to derogate from the Dignity of our SAVIOUR's Perſon, or to depreciate the Merits of his mediatorial Office. Place them as high, as Words can reach; exalt them as far, as Thought can ſoar; I ſtedfaſtly believe, You will ſtill fall ſhort, unmeaſurably ſhort, of their real Worth.—But this Conſideration ſeems to increaſe the Abſurdity of your Notion. For, if *CHRIST*'s Righteouſneſs, *his very* Righteouſneſs be imputed; then, the true Believers are altogether as righteous, as *CHRIST* himſelf. Whereas, if You maintain, that his Righteouſneſs is imputed only *as to its Effects*, You will keep clear of this Rock.

Aſp. This, I apprehend, will be like keeping clear of *Scylla*, only to fall foul upon *Charybdis*. It will drive Us upon a Method, which is inſufficient, unneceſſary, and apparently abſurd. — *Inſufficient.* For, in order to Juſtification, that muſt be imputed, which anſwers the Demands of the Law. Now nothing can do this, but the Righteouſneſs, the very Righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*. Who, by his perfect Obedience, *is the End of the Law for Righteouſneſs*. — *Unneceſſary.* What are the Effects of the REDEEMER's Righteouſneſs? Pardon of Sin, and Juſtification of our Perſons. When the Righteouſneſs of *CHRIST* is imputed, We have Pardon, We have Juſtification. Theſe therefore need not be imputed, becauſe they are poſſeſſed; poſſeſſed, as the never-failing Effects of an Intereſt in the REDEEMER's Righteouſneſs.—Sanctification is another Effect or Fruit of *CHRIST*'s Righteouſneſs. But how ſtrange would it be, to talk

of an imputed Love of GOD! Imputed Purification of Heart! Imputed Reformation of Life! Is not all this apparently *abhorrent*?

You are fixed in Thought, my Friend. Your Brow, which is generally open and expanded, I see contracted almost into a Frown. Displeased, perhaps, with the morose and meagre Business of Argumentation.

Ther. No, *Aspasio*. I am not displeased, but I must confess, your Arguments put my Attention a little upon the Stretch.

Asp. Well then; we will slacken the Cords, and relieve your Attention; by giving a familiar and comfortable View of this great Transaction. It is represented in Scripture, under the Form of a judicial Process. GOD Himself is the Judge; inconceivably holy to abhor, and inflexibly just to punish Sin. A Tribunal is erected, and inscribed with this Motto; *HE will judge the Secrets of Men, and will in no wise clear the Guilty.* The Persons summoned to appear, are *Adam* and his Children. The Accusers are, the Precepts of the Law, the Voice of Conscience, and the Tempter of the Brethren, Satan. All these advance and urge the Charge; the Charge of Guilt; horrid, aggravated, damnable Guilt. The Charge is proved; is evidenced by ten thousand thousand Facts; is absolutely undeniable. What can the Prisoner do? He has nothing to alledge in his own Defence. He is dumb with Conviction, and covered with Confusion.—Now therefore He expects the Sentence of Condemnation, and the Execution of Vengeance. But at this Hour of Need, a Refuge is provided by Grace, rich and free beyond all Imagination. *JESUS CHRIST*

CHRIST the Righteous, becomes an Advocate for the speechless guilty Wretch. IMMANUEL, the Son of GOD, and Son of Man, pleads his Cause. "Deliver Him from Destruction. I am his Surety. I have made a full Atonement; I have brought in a complete Righteousness."—This Plea, coming from a divine and infinite Person, is allowed to be valid. Coming from the Representative and Surety of the Sinner, is admitted on his Behalf. This is *Imputation*.—Then follow the Effects of divine Imputation. A Sentence is pronounced in the Sinner's Favour; absolving Him from all Guilt; releasing Him from all Penalties; declaring Him approved of GOD, and entitled to Heaven. This is *Justification*.—When the Holy SPIRIT convinces the Sinner, how much He stands in need of this Blessing; teaches Him to see clearly, that it is perfectly free for his Acceptance; and enables Him, by Faith unfeigned, to apply it unto Himself; then He is Partaker of the Gift, He is *justified*. Making continual Use of this unspeakable Benefit, He knows, that He is passed from Death unto Life; and by this Knowledge, He is renewed *, He is *sanctified*.

This View will, I trust, both relax your Attention, and comfort your Heart.

That. I am obliged to You, *Aspasio*, for your Illustration. But still the Difficulty remains. To illustrate, is one Thing; to demonstrate, is another. The Light, which shews me the Colour of a Mountain, does not remove it from my Paths. If *CHRIST*'s very Righteousness is imputed to Believers, it still appears to me, that Believers must

* Col. iii. 10.

must be altogether as righteous as *CHRIST* himself.

Asp. Believers are Partakers of that *very* Righteousness which renders *CHRIST* the Delight of his Almighty FATHER. They are interested in a *spotless* and *everlasting* Righteousness. Nay; they are made the *Righteousness of GOD in CHRIST*.—Notwithstanding these glorious Privileges, Believers are far from being altogether as righteous as *CHRIST*—unless You can suppose, that to be the Receiver, is in all Respects the same, as to be the Author and Finisher—unless, to have an imputed Righteousness, for our own particular Use, be altogether the same, as to have a mediatorial Righteousness, for the Justification of Others—unless You esteem it one and the same Thing, to be made righteous Ourselves by a meritorious Surety, and to make Others, even innumerable Millions of Sinners righteous, from our own Stock of Merit.—These are Circumstances, which create a material, a marvelous Difference, between the Righteousness of *CHRIST* and his People. Which yield Room for a vast, for an unmeasurable Pre-eminence of his to theirs.

Ther. Admitting, that Believers cannot make Others righteous; yet, if *CHRIST*'s Obedience be accounted their Righteousness, they seem to have no more Need of *pardoning* Mercy, than *CHRIST* Himself.

Asp. Yes; because, *before* this Imputation, they were sunk in Guilt, and dead in Sins. Because, *after* it, they are defective in their Duty, and in many Things offend.

Ther.

Ther. Does not this Doctrine render the Interceſſion of our SAVIOUR ſuperfluous? What Occaſion have *they* for an Advocate with the FATHER, whoſe Righteouſneſs has neither Blemiſh nor Imperfection?

Aſp. They ſtand in need of an Advocate; firſt, that they may be brought Home to *the REPAIRER of their Breaches* *, and made Partakers of his Righteouſneſs by a real Faith. Next, that their Faith may be preſerved, notwithſtanding all Oppoſition, ſtedfaſt and immoveable; or rather may be carried on, victorious and triumphant, even to the End.

Ther. You ſay, "*CHRIST* performed all that "was conditional;" then He *repented* for Us, and *believed* for Us. This muſt be admitted in Purſuance of your Principles. But this is ſo wild a Notion, ſo contrary to Reaſon and Scripture, that to mention it, is to refute it.

Aſp. *CHRIST* performed whatever was required by the Covenant of Works, both before it was violated, and after it had been tranſgreſſed. But neither *Repentance* nor *Faith* were comprehended in this Inſtitution. It knew nothing of the One, and it would not admit of the Other.—It was not therefore neceſſary, neither indeed was it poſſible, for our immaculate and Divine LORD, to repent of Sin, or believe in a SAVIOUR. But He did unſpeakably more. *He put away Sin by the Sacrifice of Himſelf* †; He is Himſelf the SAVIOUR of all the Ends of the Earth; and He has Power to beſtow that bleſſed SPIRIT, which worketh Faith, and produceth Repentance.

Ther.

* Iſai. lviii. 12. † Heb. ix. 26.

Ther. However, from what You have advanced, this will unavoidably follow; that a Man is to be justified, under the Character of a notorious Tranſgreſſor of the Law, and juſtified under the Character of a ſinleſs Obſerver of the Law? And what is this, but a *ſtaring Inconſiſtency?*

Aſp. This is not preciſely the Thing, We mean. We maintain indeed, that a Man is juſtified, as a Tranſgreſſor, for *HE juſtifieth the Ungodly.* But being juſtified, He enters upon a new State; He acquires a new Character; He is no longer Darkneſs and Guilt, but Righteouſneſs and Light in the LORD. Neither is this inconſiſtent, but harmonious; if We take in the two *conſtituent Parts* of Juſtification, The Acquittance from Guilt, and a Title to Life. The former ſuppoſes Us to be Tranſgreſſors of the Law, and ſuch the higheſt Saints in the World are. The latter requires Us to be Fulfillers of the Law, and ſuch muſt the Inheritors of Heaven be. Much leſs is this inconſiſtent, if We conſider Believers, in their *perſonal* and *relative* Capacity; as they are in themſelves, and as they are in their SURETY. Notorious or confeſſed Tranſgreſſors in Themſelves, they have a ſinleſs Obedience in *CHRIST.* The Conſciouſneſs of *that*, will be an everlaſting Motive to Humility; the Belief of *this*, an inexhauſtible Source of Joy.

All this is no more inconſiſtent, than the Union of a gloomy Contexture, and a lightſome Splendor, in thoſe detached Clouds, which float amidſt the Firmament. In themſelves, they are a lowring and dark Collection of Vapours; by the Impreſſion of

the

the Sun-beams, they are fair and bright as the polished Silver.

Ther. After all, the Imputation taught in Scripture, is not the Imputation of CHRIST's Righteousness, but of our own Faith. Agreeably to the Apostle's express Declaration, *Abraham believed GOD, and it was imputed to Him for Righteousness* *.

Asp. This Objection admits the Thing in Dispute, though it controverts the Way and Manner of obtaining it. Admits the Necessity of some *active, positive* Righteousness, in order to our Justification. In this Particular, I am glad to agree with my *Theron*; and in this Particular, I believe, the Generality of serious People agree with Us both.—Whenever their Consciences are awakened; whenever they seek to establish the Hope of eternal Life, they constantly turn their Eyes to *some* Righteousness, Which, they apprehend, may, either in Whole or in Part, answer the Demands of JEHOVAH's Law. Some look to their own zealous Reformation and *sincere* Obedience. Others call in to their Succour Works of *Supererogation* in this World, and the Discipline of Purgatory in another. My Friend would assign this Office to his *Faith*.

Ther. Is this a proper Answer to my Objection, *Aspasio?* The Text is point-blank against Your Tenet. You do wisely therefore, not to confront, but to elude the Evidence.

Asp. I did not intend it for an Answer; only as an *occasional* Observation. Which, nevertheless, has a pretty close Connection with the Subject.—Neither would I use so mean a Subterfuge, as to elude

* Rom. iv. 3.

an Argument, which I could not confute. If my Friend had allowed me Leisure to explain myself, this should have been my Reply.

It is the very Nature of Faith, to renounce all Confidence in any Work, Duty, or Qualification of our own. It is the very Nature of Faith, to claim itself, and to find the Whole of our justifying Righteousness in *CHRIST* alone. "Not I," says Faith, "but the infinite Merit of my LORD." This is most forcibly demonstrated, and no less zealously inculcated, in the Epistle to the *Philippians* *. There the Apostle interprets Himself, and settles the Subject of our present Enquiry. There He expressly declares that the Ground of his own Confidence, the Cause of his own Justification, was, not the *Grace* of *Faith*, but *the Righteousness which is of GOD* by Faith. Not the Act of Believing, but that grand and glorious Object of a Sinner's Belief, *The LORD our Righteousness*. And why should We not regard the Narrative of his Experience, as the very best Exposition of his Doctrine?

Besides; what was that Faith of *Abraham*, to which the Apostle refers? And which He proposes, as the invariable Model of our Justification? It was Faith in the *promised Seed*, even in *JESUS CHRIST* the Righteous †. It was a firm Persuasion, that this illustrious PERSON should spring from his Loins; should be the Author of eternal Salvation to Himself, and to a Multitude of Believers, numberless as the Stars of Heaven.

Accordingly, it is affirmed by the Evangelist, That *Abraham saw CHRIST's Day*. He saw his meri-

* Phil. iii. 7, 8, 9. † Compare *Gen.* xv. 5, 6. with *Gal.* iii. 16.

meritorious Obedience; saw it with an Eye of Faith; and applying it to his own Soul, rejoiced. He rejoiced, You will observe, not in his own Faith, but in *CHRIST*'s Day. An evident Proof, that his Justification was effected, not by the former, but by the latter.—Let Us then tread in the Steps of that holy Patriarch; and We shall ascribe *little*, We shall ascribe *nothing* to our Faith; but *all* to the infinitely excellent Righteousness of our REDEEMER.

* *That*, Sure, *Aspasio*, You will not presume to correct Inspiration! The inspired Writer makes no mention of a REDEEMER's Righteousness. He says expressly and positively—*It*, that is, *Abraham*'s Faith, and not any Thing else, *was counted unto Him for Righteousness*.

Asp. True, *Theron*; as those Windows are reckoned, are counted, *The Lights* of your House. And why? Because they, and not any Thing else, illuminate? No; but because they afford a Passage to the illuminating Rays. Through them, the first and best of Elements, is diffused into all your Habitation.—So *We are saved by Grace through Faith*; by Grace imputing, through Faith accepting, the Righteousness of *JESUS CHRIST*. Grace is the magnificent Source of this nobler Light; Faith is the Means of transmitting it into all the Faculties of the Soul.

When our LORD declares to the diseased Woman, *Thy Faith hath made thee whole* *: how are We to understand his Words? That the Patient's Belief, and not the Agency of *CHRIST*, wrought the Cure? To suppose this, would be extremely dero-

gatory

* Matt. ix. 22.

gatory to the Power of our great PHYSICIAN. And if We aſcribe Juſtification to the Act of Believing, this will be equally derogatory to the Obedience of our great MEDIATOR. In the *former* Caſe, *CHRIST* and his omnipotent Operation, were All in All. In the *latter* Caſe, *CHRIST* and his infinite Merit, are All in All. In *both* Caſes, Faith is only the Eye to diſcern, or the Hand to receive, the ſovereign Good.

Ther. I apprehend, the Apoſtle means, that *Abraham's* Faith, inſtead of his own perfect Obedience, was admitted as his juſtifying Righteouſneſs, and became the Cauſe of his Acceptance with GOD.

Aſp. This, I think, cannot be the Meaning. Becauſe, Faith is very particularly *diſtinguiſhed from* the Righteouſneſs which is *by* Faith, which is *of* Faith *. Theſe Forms of Expreſſion, put an apparent Difference between the evangelical Faith, and the evangelical Righteouſneſs. Since, whatever is *by* another, and *of* another, cannot, without the greateſt Violence to Reaſon and Language, be reckoned that other.—If Faith itſelf was the Cauſe of our Acceptance with GOD, then We ſhould

* *Rom.* ix. 30. *Phil.* iii. 9. The Apoſtles, I believe, never make uſe of this Phraſe, δικαιοσυνη υπερ πιστεως, or δια την πιστιν, but εκ πιστεως or δια της πιστεως. Not *for*, or on *Account of* our Faith, but *by* or *through* Faith. Making this Grace, not the procuring Cauſe, but only the Inſtrument of applying, what is procured by Another.—Such Language as the former, ſeems contrary to the ſound Words of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*. Yet, if *Theron's* Senſe of the Text under Debate were admitted, the Doctrine contained in this unſcriptural and offenſive Style, is the unavoidable Conſequence.

ſhould be juſtified, each by ſomething of his own *. Whereas, it ſtands upon Record in the Scriptures; it is an adjudged Point in the Court of Heaven; that *By ONE Man's Obedience Many ſhall be made righteous* †.—If Faith itſelf was the Cauſe of our Acceptance with GOD, then We ſhould be juſtified by a Righteouſneſs, which is confeſſedly *imperfect*. For, who has ever attained to the higheſt Degree of this Virtue? Or whoſe Faith is not mixed with an Alloy of Unbelief?—In ſhort, if Faith itſelf was the Matter of our Juſtification, I ſee not how Boaſting could be *excluded*; how the Law could be *magnified*; or what Reaſon the Apoſtle could have, to account all Things, but the Righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*, meaner than Droſs ‡.

Say not, that We preſume to correct Inſpiration. We only interpret the inſpired Word in an harmonious *Conſiſtency* with itſelf. This Senſe is agreeable to the prevailing Doctrine, and to the current Language of Scripture.—To the *prevailing Doctrine*; which is A BELIEVING IN HIM, WHO JUSTIFIETH THE UNGODLY. Sift and examine this Expreſſion; *Him* who juſtifieth. You will find, that the Work is *CHRIST*'s; *CHRIST*'s and no *Other*'s. The HOLY GHOST aſſigns not the leaſt Share, not ſo much as a Co-efficiency,

* Faith, as an Act or Duty, is properly our own, and as ſuch it is repreſented in Scripture. O Woman, great is *thy* Faith, *Matt.* xv. 28. *JESUS* ſeeing *their* Faith, *Matt.* ix. 2. After I heard of your Faith, *Eph.* i. 15.

† Rom. v. 19.

‡ *Phil.* iii. 8. The Original is Σκυβαλα—A Word of the moſt contemptible Meaning; it ſignifies the *worthleſs* Scraps, and *ſordid* Offals, which are caſt to the Dogs. The Reader may ſee this Paſſage more fully explained in *Letter* V.

to any other imaginable Cauſe. Faith therefore, if it preſumes to arrogate this exalted Prerogative, or if it pretends to the leaſt Part in this important Buſineſs, is a ſacrilegious Uſurper.—To the *current Language*; as when *David* prays, *Purge me with Hyſſop, and I ſhall be clean* *; as when GOD is called our Fear †, our Hope ‡, our Joy ‖. In theſe Places, the Inſtrument is put for the Agent, the Act for the Object. So, in the Paſſage before Us, the *Act* of Faith is put for the *Object* of Faith. It muſt be underſtood, not abſolutely, but as ſome Divines ſpeak, objectively, inſtrumentally, relatively.

Ther. In the Name of Wonder, what can You mean by this Heap of harſh and obſcure Expreſſions! Let me entreat You, *Aſpaſio*, to ſpeak in your own Style, not in the grim Dialect of *Aquinas*. I have an irreconcilable Averſion to theſe ſcholaſtic Terms. They are the *Barbariſms* of Divinity. I know but one Uſe, they are fitted to ſerve; that is, to perplex and puzzle a Cauſe, You cannot maintain. Somewhat like the Liquor, which a certain Fiſh, when cloſely purſued, is ſaid to emit: by which the Water is darkened, and the Foe eluded.

Aſp.

* *Pſal.* li. 7. *Purge me with Hyſſop*; that is, with the Blood of Atonement, ſprinkled by the Bunch of Hyſſop.—This is one of the moſt puny and deſpicable Plants. It is placed, by *Solomon*, in the *very loweſt* Claſs of Vegetables. Might not the HOLY GHOST intend to denote, by this typical Image, the beggarly and inſignificant Nature of Faith, conſidered in *itſelf*? Which becomes reſpectable and efficacious, *only* by what it borrows; *only* by what it receives. See 1 *Kings* iv. 33. *Heb.* ix. 19.

† Gen. xxxi. 42, 53. ‡ Pſal. lxxi. 5. Jer. xiv. 8.
‖ Pſal. xliii. 4.

Asp. This, *Theron*, is the Meaning of our uncouth Phrases: It is not Faith itself, which justifies; but that Righteousness, which Faith continually *views*; which Faith delightfully *apprehends*; and on which it finally *terminates*.

To be plainer still—We are justified by Faith, in the same Manner, as We are fed by the Hand, or nourished by the Mouth. Neither the Hand nor the Mouth are the *Cause* of our Sustenance, but *Instruments* only, that of conveying it, this of receiving it *.—If an Apostle affirms, *We are justified by Faith:* Faith itself declares, *In the LORD I have Righteousness.* Put these Passages together, and You will have the true Sense of our Doctrine, and the true Doctrine of the Gospel.

When *Themistocles* fled from the Persecution of his own Countrymen, what recommended Him to the Protection of King *Admetus?*—Not his Name; that was obnoxious—Not his Actions; they had been hostile—But the Person of the *young Prince*; whom the distressed Refugee caught up in his

 Arms;

* Though I am entirely of *Theron*'s Mind, and can by no means admire our *scholastic* Divines, or their *logical* Terms; yet a Remark from *Paræus*, couched in this Style, is so pertinent to the Purpose, and so full an Explication of the Point, that it would be an Injury to the Cause, not to make it a Part of my Notes. And some Readers, I apprehend, not much acquainted with this old-fashioned hoary Dialect, may be well enough pleased to view a Specimen: and like it, as they do the *Rust* of a Medal, merely for its Uncouthness and Antiquity.

" Faith justifies, says my Author, not *effectively*, as " working an habitual Righteousness in Us; not *mate-* " *rially*, as though it were itself the constituent Cause " of our Justification; but it justifieth *objectively*, as it " apprehendeth *CHRIST*; and *instrumentally*, as it " applieth his Righteousness."

Arms; and, charged with these Credentials, presented Himself to the royal Parent *.—So, Faith recommends to GOD, and justifies the Soul, not for itself, or its own Worth; but on Account of what it *embraces*, what it *presents*, and what it *pleads*.

Ther. Is not this a fanciful Distinction †, and an excessive Refinement? Has it any Foundation in Scripture?

Asp. It is implied in almost all the Representations of *CHRIST*, and all the Descriptions of Faith, which occur in the sacred Writings.

CHRIST is likened to *Clothing*; and Believers are said to *have put on CHRIST* ‡. Now, it cannot be the Act of putting on, that covers our Bodies, or keeps them warm; but the commodious Garment, which is wore.—He is compared to *Bread: I am the Bread of Life* ||. Shall we say? It is the Act of Eating, which strengthens the Constitution, and recruits our Spirits. No surely; but the Food eaten and digested.—*CHRIST* was typefied by the *City of Refuge* §; and Sinners, by the obnoxious Manslayer.

* This, says *Plutarch*, was a Custom peculiar to that Country; was reckoned the most solemn Method of supplicating Favour; and *seldom* met with a Repulse.—To which I may add, It is a Custom which *Christians* should imitate, in all their Addresses to the GOD and FATHER of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*. When thus used, thus improved, it will *never* fail of Success.

† Dr. *Gill* thought it no fanciful Distinction, when He so judiciously observed; Faith is an *Act* or Duty of the Soul, but does not justify as such. It is a *Grace* of the SPIRIT, but does not justify as such. But We are justified by Faith, as it *looks* to, *apprehends*, and *embraces CHRIST*'s Righteousness for our Justification.

‡ Gal. iii. 27. || John vi. 35. § Numb. xxxv. 13.

flayer. Who, if He fled to one of those privileged Abodes; and there remained, was safe. No Profecution against Him could be valid: He had nothing to fear from the Avenger of Blood. In this Case, was it the bare Act of Flying, which screened the Criminal? By no means: this *conveyed* Him to a Place of Security. But the *Place itself* was his Sanctuary, his Asylum, his Safeguard.

Faith is styled, *A receiving of CHRIST**: *As many as received Him, to them gave He Power*, to them He granted the Privilege, and the high Prerogative, *to become the Sons of GOD*. The Office of Faith is, according to this Definition, not to contribute its Quota, much less to depoſit the whole Sum, but to take and uſe the ineſtimable Gift.—Faith is called, *A Looking unto JESUS* †; in Alluſion, I ſuppoſe, to the famous Expedient, provided for the wounded *Iſraelites* ‡. Our crucified LORD was prefigured, by the brazen Serpent; our Guilt, by the Stings of the fiery Serpents; and our Faith, by looking to the miraculous Remedy. Did the healing Power, I would aſk, reſide in the mere Act of viewing? No: but in the Emblem of

* *John* i. 12. See alſo *Rom.* v. 17. Where a Critic of accurate Judgment, and delicate Taſte (though little known in *England*) makes this Remark on the Word παραδεγμα, *Non juſtificat Actus ſumendi, quatenus eſt Actus; ſed illud quod ſumitur aut apprehenditur.* BENGELIUS in loc.—His Annotations on the New Teſtament are compriſed in a ſmall *Quarto* Volume. They preſent the Reader with many refined Obſervations, on the Elegancies of the Style, and Sublimity of the Doctrines. They are a Pattern of the *conciſe* Manner; they gratify our Appetite, yet keep Us hungry and craving; and, which is the *crowning* Excellency, they all along indicate a Heart warm and glowing with the Love of its Subject.

† Heb. xii. 2. ‡ Numb. xxi. 8.

a dying SAVIOUR, elevated on the Pole, and ordained for the Recovery of the People. *Here* all the Efficacy was lodged. *From hence* it was all derived. The Action of the Eye, like the Office of Faith, was only to fetch home, and apply the ſanative Virtue.

Ther. Suppoſe all You advance, to be true; and all You maintain, to be ſolid; what is the Advantage of ſuch a Diſtinction?

Aſp. Much. It preſerves, unſhared and inviolate, the Honour of GOD our SAVIOUR. It eſtabliſhes, on an immoveable Foundation, the Hope and the Comfort of a Chriſtian.—An Inſtance, which lately occurred, will explain my Meaning. A certain Writer, treating of that tremendous Day, when GOD will ariſe to adminiſter eternal Judgment; when He will come to be avenged of his unfaithful Servants, and to deſtroy his avowed Enemies; exhorts Us All to labour after a living Faith—"which alone, ſays He, can "carry Us ſafe to the Harbour, amidſt the univer-"ſal Deluge of Woe, which is going to overflow "the Earth."

This Exhortation, You ſee, aſcribes every Thing to an Act of our own; to Man's Faith, not to the REDEEMER's Righteouſneſs. This, therefore, muſt greatly diſhonour the all-ſufficient REDEEMER, and his infinite Merit.—As this Act of our own is confeſſedly imperfect and changeable, it affords but a crazy Bottom, on which to embark our everlaſting Intereſts. A Conſideration, which muſt damp our Joy, and often fill Us with uneaſy Suſpicions.—Whereas, let *CHRIST* be the Veſſel of Preſervation and Conveyance; let Faith ſignify

nify our Entering upon it, and our Continuing in it; then all is regular, and all is ſecure. Salvation is of the LORD. *CHRIST* has the Honour and Glory. While We have an Ark, which no Waves can overwhelm, no Rocks can ſhatter.

Once more, therefore, let me obſerve, in Purſuance of this important Remark; That Faith is repreſented as *laying hold* on GOD our SAVIOUR *; *leaning* upon our BELOVED †; *cleaving* to the LORD ‡.—Pleaſe to take notice of yonder Vine. Its Shoots are weak, and its Branches flimſy. Being abſolutely unable to ſupport themſelves, they are furniſhed with a very remarkable Set of *Claſpers*. Which, like ſo many Fingers, lay hold on the Pegs of the Wall, or faſten themſelves to the Poles within their Reach. Without ſuch a Proviſion, the Boughs muſt lie proſtrate on the Ground, and be expoſed to the Inſults of every Foot. Whereas, by this kind Contrivance of Nature, ſo *creeping* a Plant, will climb into the Air, and enjoy the Breeze; ſo *feeble* a Plant, will ſtand out the Winter, and defy the Storms.—An inſtructive Admonition to Sinners! And no contemptible Illuſtration of Faith, eſpecially in its principal and moſt diſtinguiſhing Employ! Thus let Us apprehend the bleſſed *JESUS*; hold Us faſt by our adored REDEEMER; cleave to his ineffable Worthineſs, as thoſe twining Tendrils, by repeated Circumvolutions, adhere to their ſubſtantial Supporters. Then ſhall We riſe, by Merits *not our own*, from the moſt abject and miſerable Condition, to a State of everlaſting Honour and Joy.

* Iſai. xxvii. 5. † Cant. viii. 5. ‡ Acts xi. 23.

Ther. Some People, I believe, would hardly forbear ſmiling at the Peculiarity of your Diction, and might be inclined to call your Diſcourſe *Canting*, rather than *Reaſoning*. For my own Part, I muſt acknowledge, that, as all your peculiar Phraſes are derived from the Scriptures, I hear them with Reverence, and without the leaſt Diſpoſition to ſneer. Was my Friend delivering a *Latin* Oration, it would be a ſufficient Warrant for any of his Expreſſions, to prove that they came from the *Ciceronian* Mint. And will it not be an equally ſufficient Authority, for any Modes of Speech uſed in a theological Eſſay, to alledge that they bear the Stamp of the *Bible*?

Aſp. Thanks to my Friend — replied *Aſpaſio*, making a low Bow—Thanks for his indulgent Conceſſion. Yet let Him know, that He has manifeſted his Judgment, as much as He has exerciſed his Candour. The Scripture is the Rule, not only of our Faith, but of our Language alſo, whenever We would explain that ſacred Subject.—Can any Expreſſions be more proper or more emphatical, than thoſe which unerring Wiſdom has ſelected for our Uſe? Impoſſible! Therefore We are commanded to *hold faſt a Form of ſound Words* *, as well as a Syſtem of ſound Principles.—Can any Phraſes expreſs divine Things, with greater Preciſion and Perſpicuity, than thoſe which the divine SPIRIT has employed for this Purpoſe? Arrogance itſelf dares not entertain the Thought. Therefore We think it unexceptionably right, to declare the Truths of the Goſpel, *not in the Words which Man's Wiſdom teacheth, but which the HOLY GHOST teacheth* †.

Ther.

* 2 Tim. i. 13. † 1 Cor. ii. 13.

Ther. Though I make no Objection to your Language, I have yet another Scruple with regard to your Doctrine.—Do the *antient Fathers* adopt or inculcate this imputed Righteouſneſs? If it was ſo important an Article of our Faith, ſurely it could not be unknown in thoſe early Ages, which were ſo near the apoſtolical Fountain. It would not have been omitted by thoſe zealous Preachers, who choſe to endure all the Rigours of Perſecution, rather than renounce their holy Profeſſion.

Aſp. I think, it were ſufficient to anſwer this Queſtion, by aſking another—Do the Apoſtles, does the HOLY SPIRIT of GOD, ſpeaking in Scripture, inculcate this Doctrine, or diſplay this Privilege? If ſo, We need not be very ſolicitous for any farther Authority. *To the Law, and to the Teſtimony* *, is our grand, our final Appeal. Amidſt all the Darkneſs and Uncertainty, which evidently run through the Writings of the beſt of Men, this is our unſpeakable Happineſs, That *We have a more ſure Word of Prophecy; to which We do well to take heed* †.

However; to be a little more particular—It cannot be expected, that We ſhould find many Paſſages in thoſe pious Authors, very ſtrong and very explicit, upon the Point. Becauſe, in their Days, it was not ſo profeſſedly oppoſed; and therefore could not be ſo exactly diſcuſſed, as in later Ages. Nevertheleſs, they have left enough behind them, to avouch the Subſtance of what We aſſert; *That a Man is not juſtified by any Works, Duties, or Righteouſneſs of his own, but only by Faith in JESUS CHRIST.*—I cannot ſay, that I have charged my Memory with their

* Iſai. viii. 20. † 2 Pet. i. 19.

their very Words; and for that Reaſon, muſt not attempt at preſent to make any Citation. But, when a proper Opportunity offers, and their Works are before me, I may poſſibly produce a few of their Teſtimonies.

In the mean Time, I can mention a Set of Writers, whoſe Atteſtation will, I imagine, carry as much Weight with my Friend, as the united Voice of the *Greek* and *Latin* Fathers.

Ther. Who are they?

Aſp. Our venerable *Reformers.* The Homilies compoſed by thoſe excellent Divines, are as expreſs to my Purpoſe, as they are unexceptionable in their Evidence. This is their Language—"The true "Underſtanding of this Doctrine, *We be juſtified* "*freely by Faith without Works*, is not, that this "our *Act to believe*, or this our Faith in *CHRIST*, "doth juſtify Us: for that were to count Our- "ſelves to be juſtified by ſome Act or Virtue, that "is *within Ourſelves.* But the true Meaning "thereof, is, That although We hear GOD's "Word, and believe it; although We have Hope "and Faith, Charity and Repentance, and do "never ſo many good Works: Yet We muſt re- "nounce the Merit of all our Virtues and good "Deeds, as Things that be far too weak and in- "ſufficient, to deſerve Remiſſion of Sin, and our "Juſtification. We muſt truſt only in GOD's "Mercy, and that Sacrifice which our High- "Prieſt and Saviour *JESUS CHRIST*, the "SON of GOD, offered for Us upon the "Croſs."

The Homily ſubjoins a very appoſite Illuſtration; which may conclude our Diſcourſe with perfect Pro-

priety, and I hope with equal Efficacy.—" So that " as St. *John Baptiſt*, although He were never ſo " virtuous and godly a Man, yet in the Matter of " forgiving Sin, He did put the People from Him, " and appoint them unto *CHRIST*; ſaying thus " unto them, Behold! Yonder *is the LAMB of* " *GOD, which taketh away the Sins of the World:* " Even ſo, as great and as godly a Virtue as the " lively Faith is, yet it *putteth Us from itſelf*, and " remitteth Us unto *CHRIST*, for to have only " by Him Remiſſion of Sins or Juſtification. So " that our Faith in *CHRIST*, as it were, ſaith " unto Us thus, It is not I that take away your " Sins, but it is *CHRIST* only; and to Him " only I ſend You for that Purpoſe, forſaking " therein all your good Words, Thoughts, and " Works, and only putting your Truſt in " *CHRIST* *."

Ther. If there be any tolerable Senſe of the Notion under Debate, I think, it muſt be underſtood as follows.—*CHRIST*'s Performance of the Law of his Mediation, or, in other Words, his unſinning Obedience to the moral Law, and the ſpotleſs Sacrifice of Himſelf to the vindictive Juſtice of GOD; theſe are the *only* valuable Conſideration, on Account of which, the *gracious* GOD reſtores guilty Creatures to a State of Acceptance with his Divine MAJESTY.

Aſp. If this is what You mean by the *Law of Mediation*, I am far from denying your Propoſition. I would never deſire to wrangle; but, if poſſible, to acquieſce. I would not wiſh to eſpy Faults, but rather

* See the ſecond Part of the *Homily on Salvation*.

rather to find Propriety, in my *Theron*'s Sentiments. May his Faith, which is *thus far* advanced, be carried on by Grace, till it is completed in Glory!—That unfeigning Obedience, and that ſpotleſs Sacrifice, are indeed the only valuable, they are alſo the *truly*, or rather the *infinitely* valuable Conſideration. The Obedience being performed in *our Name*, and the Sacrifice offered in *our Stead*, have fully merited for Us the Remiſſion of Sins, and the Enjoyment of Life: and all this, not only from the gracious, but even from the *juſt*, the faithful, the righteous GOD.

But then, they muſt be *imputed*, in order to furniſh Us with a Claim, and inveſt Us with a Right, to the purchaſed Privileges.—Suppoſe them not imputed; and what becomes of our *Intereſt* in them? They are like a Medicine prepared, but not applied.—Suppoſe them imputed; and they lay a firm, an apparent, a rational *Foundation*, for every pleaſing Hope, and for every heavenly Bleſſing.

Ther. I fear, I have acknowledged too much.—My Thoughts fluctuate. My Mind is unſettled.—I would not withſtand the Truth. I would not diſbelieve any Doctrine of the Goſpel. Yet—what ſhall I ſay? While I liſten to your Reaſoning, I am half a Convert. When I recollect the Objections, I revert to my firſt Opinion.

Of this, however, I am convinced, That human Righteouſneſs is *inſufficient* for our Juſtification. Here your Arguments have carried their Point. I ſhall henceforth place my Hopes of everlaſting Happineſs, not upon any Works of my own, but upon the free Goodneſs, and unbounded Beneficence, of the Supreme BEING. Purſuant to that Maxim

Maxim of Scripture, *The Gift of GOD is eternal Life.*

Asp. You do well, *Theron*, to expect eternal Life as the Gift of GOD, not as the Wages of your own Obedience. But be pleased to remember, that all the Gifts of Grace, though perfectly *free* to Sinners, are founded upon a grand and inestimable *Price*, paid by their SAVIOUR.—Are they entirely absolved from Guilt? It is because *CHRIST* gave his Life for their Ransom.—Are they heard with Acceptance when they pray? It is because their exalted HIGH-PRIEST intercedes in their Behalf.—Are they completely justified, and instated in endless Bliss? It is because their REDEEMER's consummate Righteousness, is the glorious Equivalent for this and every other Blessing *.—Therefore, when You mention eternal Life as the Gift of GOD, You should not forget to add with the Holy Apostle, *through JESUS CHRIST our LORD* †.

——Well, my *Theron*; what say You farther? Is your Quiver emptied? Are your Scruples satisfied? May I interpret this Silence, as an Act of Assent?

Ther. Observe, how the *Ranunculuses*, on yonder gay Parterre, have contracted their full-blown Tufts; and the *Tulips*, now the Dews are descending, have closed their expanded Cups.—Such is the

* "I should fear, says a pious Writer, to look at "that *great GOD and SAVIOUR*, who has suffered "so much for my Soul, did I not allow his Atonement "to be of *infinite* Value, and *an Equivalent* to any De- "mands from the FATHER."

† Rom. vi. 20.

the State of my Thoughts. They are all bent inwards; *collected* in themſelves; and *pondering* upon your Diſcourſe. Which has inclined me, before I was aware, to contemplate, rather than talk.—You will excuſe my Thoughtfulneſs, *Aſpaſio*. Or, if it wants an Apology, You muſt blame Yourſelf. For, had your Reaſons been leſs cogent, my Attention had been more diſengaged.

Aſp. My dear *Theron*, I ſhall only wiſh, in Alluſion to your own Simile, and in the Language of the beſt of Books; That theſe Truths may *diſtil as the Dew* * upon your Mind, and *lie all Night upon your Branches* †. This, I am perſuaded, is the only Way to have all your Comforts *green before the Sun*, and all your Virtues *flouriſh as an Herb*. Whereas, under the Influence of any other Faith, I am afraid, they will be as the Garden, that is viſited with a Drought; or as the Leaves, that are ſmitten with a Blaſt.

Ther. I ſhall attentively conſider, both your Doctrine, and your Arguments. Which that I may execute, with more Eaſe, and to better Purpoſe, be pleaſed to *ſum up*, in a few Words, the Subſtance of what has paſſed.—This done, it will be Time to withdraw. The Flowers, You ſee, are our Monitors. They have folded up their Robes, and veiled their Beauties. A Cuſtom which they ſeldom uſe, till the *riſing Damps* render it unſafe, for their Maſter to be among them; and the *ſurrounding Gloom* renders it difficult, for His Eye to diſtinguiſh them.

Aſp. You could not oblige me more, than by giving me ſuch a Command.—We truſt for Salvation,

Not

* Deut. xxxii. 2. † Job xxix. 19.

Not on our own *external Duties*. This were to build our Houſe upon the Sand. Which, when the Rains deſcend, when the Floods riſe, when the Winds blow with tempeſtuous Violence, will certainly fall; and bury the Builder, with all his vain Hopes, in irretrievable Ruin.

Not on the *Sincerity* of our *Hearts*. This, if oppoſed to *CHRIST*, and made the Rival of his Merits, will be a "deſpiſed broken Idol." *Deſpiſed*, by the infinitely ſublime and majeſtic RULER of the World. *Broken*, with regard to the Streſs We lay, or the Confidence We repoſe, on ſo deceitful a Prop. No more able to ſtand in the Judgment of the Great Day, than *Dagon* was able to maintain his Station, before the Ark of the LORD GOD of Hoſts *.

Not upon our *Faith*. This is often weak, as the rickety Child: ſometimes quite faint, like a Perſon in a deep Swoon: always imperfect, like every other Performance of ours. Alas! To what afflicting Fears, to what grievous Deſpondency, ſhould I be perpetually liable, if my own Faith was the Ground of my Juſtification. Bleſſed be the FATHER of Mercies! We have a ſurer Support. Not upon Faith, but upon its gracious AUTHOR, and glorious OBJECT, is the Hope of *Iſrael* founded. Yet

Not upon our LORD's Righteouſneſs, conſidered only as paſſive; but upon his active and paſſive Obedience united. All that He *did*, in Conformity to the Commands of the Law; and all that He *ſuffered*, in Submiſſion to its Penalty. Both which, immenſely dignified by his divine Nature, are

* 1 Sam. v. 3, 4.

are a Baſis for our Faith, which nothing can ſhake; are a Foundation for our Affiance, which can never be removed.—Nothing elſe, in any Creature, or in all Worlds, could expiate the *leaſt Sin*. This, not only expiates all Sin, but gives a Title, to *every Bleſſing*—to the Bleſſings of Grace, and of Glory—of evangelical Holineſs, and everlaſting Happineſs.

DIA-

DIALOGUE XI.

ASPASIO.

I HAVE often purpoſed, and as often forgot, to aſk my *Theron*—What *Picture* He was ſo attentively ſurveying, when I ſtole unperceived upon Him, in this favourite Arbour *.

Ther. I was indulging a penſive Pleaſure, in viewing the Ruins, and contemplating the Fate of *Babylon*—that renowned and opulent City! Once the Reſidence of the *Aſſyrian* Monarchs, and Capital of one of the greateſt Empires in the World. The Draught I held in my Hand, repreſented ſome of its Remains. And indeed this was the very laſt Subject, which employed my Thoughts. In the Morning, my Son brought me his Obſervations upon the Scene; which I have juſt now been reviſing.

For, I frequently ſet Him, to exerciſe his Judgment, or diſplay his Fancy, on remarkable Paſſages, which occur in Hiſtory.—He was lately commiſſioned to determine a Controverſy, between the illuſtrious

* *See* Dialogue V.

Leonidas, and the leſs celebrated *Pædaretus*. This was the Point in Debate: Which of them diſcovered the *trueſt* Generoſity of Spirit, and the *moſt heroic* Love of their Country? The former, who expoſed his Life, nay, devoted Himſelf to Death, in its Defence? Or the latter, who, when He was Candidate for a Seat among the Three Hundred, and loſt his Election; inſtead of being chagrined or diſſatisfied, went home unfeignedly rejoicing, "That "there were found in *Sparta* three hundred Men, "more worthy than Himſelf?"—The Taſk of this Day was, To give a *deſcriptive Picture* of thoſe wonderful Ruins.

Aſp. Pray, let me have the Pleaſure of hearing the young Gentleman's Performance.

Ther. It will be too long, and too puerile: tire your Patience, and offend your Taſte.

Aſp. I don't uſe to make either of theſe Complaints, when I am entertained with *Theron*'s Compoſitions. And, as the Son has ſo much of his Father's Genius, I am not at all apprehenſive of any ſuch Diſappointment.—We have a moſt agreeable Situation, and more than an Hour's Leiſure. I muſt therefore repeat my Requeſt.

Ther. 'Tis true, I have retouched the Sketch: which may render it ſomewhat more tolerable. And ſince You perſiſt in your Demand, I will read the Paper.—Only deſiring ſome Allowance for a little *Luxuriancy* of Imagination. Which, in young Writers it may be adviſable to indulge, rather than repreſs *. As Age and Judgment will, probably, come

* This Opinion is authoriſed by that penetrating and correct Critic, QUINTILIAN. Audeat hæc Ætas plura, &c

come with the Pruning-knife, and make the proper Retrenchments.—I muſt farther obſerve, that, contrary to the Cuſtom which prevails in our Schools, I generally chooſe to have Him expreſs his Sentiments in *Engliſh*. Becauſe, it is in *this* Language, He muſt communicate his own, and become acquainted with the Ideas of his Neighbours. Becauſe, to acquire ſome good Degree of Propriety and Fluency in this his native Tongue, will be incomparably more ſerviceable, than to ſpeak *Latin* with the *Terentian* Elegance, or to write it with the *Ciceronian* Copiouſneſs.

Is this *Babylon?* The Glory of Kingdoms! The Beauty of the *Chaldean* Excellency!

Where once the gorgeous Eaſt, with richeſt Hand,
Shower'd on her Kings barbaric Pearl and Gold.

How is She fallen! Fallen from the Height of Magnificence, into the Abyſs of Confuſion! What was once the Object of univerſal Admiration, is now become a Spectacle of Aſtoniſhment and Horror.

The *Palace*, where Majeſty ſat enthroned like ſome terreſtrial Deity, is a Heap of Rubbiſh: no longer diſtinguiſhed by an Air of ſuperior Elegance, but by ſtronger and more melancholy Marks of de-

& inveniat, & inventis gaudeat, ſint licet illa non ſatis ficca & ſevera. Facile Remedium eſt Ubertatis, ſterilia mello Labore vincuntur. Illa mihi in Pueris Natura nimium Spei dabit, in qua Ingenium Judicio præſumitur. Materiam eſſe primum volo abundantiorem, atque ultra quam oportet fuſam. Multum inde decoquent Anni, multum Ratio limobit aliquid velut Uſu ipſo deteretur. Lib. II. Inſt.

parted Dignity *.—Where, the Nobles of that *ſumptuous Court*, trailed along the marble Pavements their Robes of Purple and Embroidery; there, the creſted Snake hiſſes, or the fierce envenomed Adder glides.

How diſgraced is the *Room* of *State*; and what Contempt, deſerved Contempt, is poured upon the *Banqueting-houſe*! In the firſt, the haughty Monarch, "who ſaid in his Heart, *I am, and none* "*elſe beſides me* †," gave Audience to cringing Sycophants and adoring Vaſſals. In the laſt, Hoſpitality, forgetting her generous Character, acted as an infamous Procureſs for Debauchery; and Luxury and Lewdneſs almoſt brutalized *a People*, profuſely *given to Pleaſures* ‡. Now, Thorns over-run the Circumference, and "Deſolation ſits in the Thre-"ſhold of them both."—Where are the Roofs of Ivory, painted with *Vermillion*, and adorned with *Sculpture*?

* *Benjamin*, a *Jew* of *Tudela*, in his *Itinerary*, written about the Year of our LORD 1170, tells Us—"That "He was upon the Place, where this City formerly "ſtood, and found it wholly deſolated and deſtroyed. "Only ſome Ruins of *Nebuchadnezzar*'s Palace were ſtill "remaining; but Men were afraid to go near them, "by reaſon of the many Serpents and Scorpions, that "were then in the Place."

† Iſai. xlvii. 10.

‡ *Given to Pleaſures*—This is *Iſaiah*'s Character of the *Babylonians*, Chap. xlvii. 8. On which Paſſage, nothing can afford a clearer Comment, than the Account which *Quintus Curtius* gives of their unbounded Voluptuouſneſs. *Babylonii maxime in Vinum, & quæ Ebrietatem ſequuntur, effuſi ſunt. Nihil Urbis ejus corruptius Moribus, nihil ad irritandas illiciendaſque immodicas Voluptates inſtructius.* Lib. V. Whoever reads what follows, in that elegant and modeſt Hiſtorian, will not think *Eugenio*'s Expreſſion (*brutaliſed*) too ſevere for ſuch horribly corrupt Manners.

Sculpture? The radiant Roofs, whose Lamps of burnished Silver, pendent in many a blazing Row, yielded Light as from another Sky? Swept from their Foundations, they lie clotted with defiling Dirt, or clasped with tangling Briars.—*Music* no longer pours her Harmony, through the spacious and pompous Apartment; but the Night-Owl, nestling in some Cleft of the Ruins, screams her harsh and portentous Dissonance. *Joy* no longer leads up the sprightly Dance, amidst the Lustre of that artificial Day; but the solitary Bat flits in silent Circles, or flaps her sooty Wings.—All those gay Delights—let the *Sons* of *Sensuality* hear the Tale, and take Warning from the Catastrophe!—all those gay Delights are extinguished, like one of their feeblest Tapers; which, having illuminated for a while the festive Assembly, shone itself to the Edges of the exhausted Socket, and in a Moment flashed into Stench and Darkness.

The *Walls*, were cemented with Bitumen *, and consolidated into the Firmness of a Flint. The *Towers* were more like the everlasting Mountains †, than

* The Walls were built of Brick; and cemented with a *glutinous* Kind of Slime; which binds more firmly than any Mortar, and soon grows harder, than the Brick or Stones themselves.—These Fortifications were, according to the Account given by *Herodotus*, in *Breadth* eighty-seven Feet, in *Height* three hundred and fifty Feet, and reckoned to be absolutely *impregnable*. Insomuch that the Inhabitants, when besieged by *Cyrus*, insulted Him from the Walls, and laughed at his Attempt, as a vain impracticable Project.—Οἱ δὲ ἐπὶ τῶν τειχῶν κατεγέλων τὴν πολιορκίαν. XENOPH: *Inst. Cyr.* Lib. VII.

† *Berosus*, describing some of the Edifices, erected in this City, says; Τὴν ὄψιν ἀποδοὺς ὁμοιοτάτην τοῖς ὄρεσι. Such was their Compass and Elevation, that *they appeared like Moun-*

than the Work of human Hands. The Inhabitants, confiding in ſuch prodigious Bulwarks, defied the approaching Enemy; and looked down with a fearleſs Diſdain, on the Army of Beſiegers. But now the Prophet's Threatening is moſt terribly fulfilled; *Babylon is fallen, is fallen* *. *Her broad Walls are utterly broken* †. And all Her Fortifications, though ſtrong and ſtable, as the united Productions of the Quarry and the Foreſt could make them, *are demoliſhed; are laid low; are brought to the Ground, even to the Duſt* ‡.

Where are the *Gates*, the grand and glittering Gates ‖, which admitted the triumphant Hoſts, or poured forth their numerous Legions againſt the Day of Battle? Not one Trace remains, to tell the inquiſitive Stranger; "Here the ſpacious Avenues "opened: Here the maſſy Portals roſe."—Commodious *Walks*, in which the cluſtering Merchants raiſed the buſy Hum, and planned the Schemes of Commerce; ample *Streets*, in which Induſtry drove the toiling Car, or ſmote the ſounding Anvil; are ſhrouded with matted Graſs, or buried beneath the rankeſt

Mountains. This may be the Reaſon, why *Babylon*, though ſituate in a Plain, is called a *Mountain*; *Behold! I am againſt Thee, O deſtroying Mountain, ſaith the* LORD. Though I rather think, the Word is to be taken in the figurative Senſe, frequently uſed by the Prophets. Who by *Mountain*, expreſs a *powerful*, by *Foreſt*, a *populous* State or City. *Jer.* li. 25.

Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. X.

* Iſai. xxi. 9. † Jer. li. 58. ‡ Iſai. xxv. 12.

‖ There were no leſs than an hundred Gates, all of *ſolid Braſs*. Hence it is, that when JEHOVAH promiſes to make *Cyrus* Maſter of *Babylon*, He ſpeaks in this very remarkable and particularizing Manner; *I will break in Pieces before Thee the Gates of Braſs*, Iſai. xlv. 2.

rankeſt Weeds. Silence, in both Places, a ſullen Silence reigns; and Inactivity, a death-like Inactivity, ſlumbers.

What is become of thoſe *Hanging-gardens*, which, for curious Contrivance, and ſtupendous Labour, were never equaled in any Nation under Heaven? *Terraces*, that overlooked the talleſt Houſes? *Parterres*, exalted to the Clouds, and opening their flowery Beauties in that ſtrange Region! *Groves*, whoſe very Roots were higher than the Tops of the loftieſt Trees *!—They are now ſmitten by a dreadful Blaſt. Their Beauty is decayed, like a withered Leaf. Their very Being is gone, *like the Chaff of the Summer Threſhing-floors; which the Wind carrieth away, and its Place is no where found* †. What was once the favourite Retreat of a Queen, and the Admiration of the whole World, is now a Neſt for poiſonous Reptiles, and a Kennel for ravenous Beaſts. —The Traveler, inſtead of expatiating with Delight, where this *penſile Paradiſe* flouriſhed, is ſtruck with Horror; keeps at a trembling Diſtance; and, lifting his Eyes to Heaven, as He ſurveys the rueful Spot, cries out; *Righteous art Thou, O LORD, and true are thy Judgments!*

Here ſtands an *Obeliſk*, maimed by the Stroke of revolving Years, like a Mountain-Oak ſhattered by the flaming Bolt. Another, all unhinged and quite disjointed, ſeems to tremble before every Blaſt that blows.—There, the *Pyramid* ‡; firm as the ſolid Rock,

* *Penſiles Horti ſunt, ſummam Murorum Altitudinem æquantes, multarumque Arborum Umbra & Proceritate amœni.* CURT. Lib. V.

† Dan. ii. 35.

‡ *Strabo* calls the Temple of *Belus* a *Pyramid*. Lib. XV.

Rock, and ſtedfaſt, One would have thought, as the perpetual Hills; wrenched from its mighty Baſe, is tumbled headlong in enormous Ruin, and has cruſhed many a Structure by its Fall.—See, yonder, the *triumphal Arch*; which exhibited, through its extenſive and beautiful Bend, an advantageous View of the Firmament. It was, once, the graceful Memorial of ſome celebrated Victory; it is, now, converted into a Trophy of a very different Kind. Such is its proud aſpiring Brow; and nothing remains, but two uneven, battered, ragged Stumps; which ſerve to recognize the deſtructive Ravages of Time; or rather, the irreſiſtible Vengeance of Heaven.

Spires, that pierced the Clouds, and ſhot into the Skies, are leveled with the trodden Soil. On *Pinacles*, to which the ſtrong-winged Bird could hardly ſoar, the groveling Worm crawls, and the ſordid Snail leaves her ſlimy Track.—*Baths*, that contained the tranſlucent Wave, and were ſo often perfumed with odoriferous Unguents, are choked with Filth; the grand *Colonade*, that ſurrounded them, is ſhivered to Pieces; and the elevated *Dome*, that covered them, is daſhed to the Ground.—Where the public *Aqueducts* conveyed Cleanlineſs and Health, along their cryſtal Currents; there, croking Vermine ſwarm among the Weeds, and noiſome Exhalations ſteam from the Mire.—I look round on the Plains, the almoſt

But if the Critics in Hiſtory ſhould queſtion or deny the Exiſtence of Pyramids among the *Babylonians*, for this and other Liberties uſed by our young Declaimer, *Horace* ſhall make an Apology:

——— *Pictoribus atque Poetis*
Quidlibet audendi ſemper fuit æqua Poteſtas.

almoſt boundleſs Plains, on which this ſuperb imperial City aroſe! They were once a Magazine of Plenty, a Source of vegetable Riches, for their royal Miſtreſs. What are they now? A foul, incurable Moraſs; a dead, ſtagnating Lake. *A Poſſeſſion for the Bittern, and Pools of Water* *.

Auguſt and ſtately *Temples*, which ſeemed to affect the Neighbourhood of the Skies †, are proſtrate in the very Duſt.—Who can point the Spot, where the conſecrated Victim bled, or the ſacred Fire glowed? Where the ſceptred Image lifted its majeſtic Head, or the venerating Crouds bowed the ſuppliant Knee ‡? Degraded are thoſe ſplendid Vanities, and caſt (according to the Denunciation of the ſacred Oracles) *to the Bats and to the Moles* ‖. All is low; low as the ſpurious Dignity of the Idols they complimented; low *as the Straw, that is trodden down for the Dunghil* §.

Sepulchres,

* Iſai. xiv. 23.

† A Tower in the Temple of *Belus*, and dedicated to his Worſhip, was moſt amazingly high. It conſiſted of eight Piles of Building, erected one above another. It aroſe to the Elevation of ſix hundred Feet perpendicular. And is thought, by the learned *Bochart*, to have been Part of that ſuperb Work, which was begun when *the whole Earth was of one Language:* but miſcarried, or rather was providentially defeated, by the Confuſion of Tongues. In this Structure, there were doubtleſs very ſtrong Traces of that arrogant Boaſt; *Let Us build Us a City and a Tower, whoſe Top may reach to Heaven*, Gen. xi. 4.

‡ Alluding to that prodigious Inſtance of Profuſeneſs, Oſtentation, and idolatrous Madneſs, *the golden Image ſet up in the Plain of* Dura: *whoſe Height* (that is, the Height of the Statue and Pedeſtal taken together) *was threeſcore Cubits*, Dan. iii. 1. See PRIDEAUX's *Connection*, Vol. I. p. 95, *&c.* p. 567, *&c.*

‖ Iſai. ii. 20. § Iſai. xxv. 10.

Sepulchres, venerable Repoſitories of the Dead; awful Manſions, deſtined to everlaſting Concealment; are cleft and rent aſunder. They diſcloſe the horrid Secrets of the Pit, and frightfully yawn upon the blaſted Day. Poſſibly, ſome ravenous Creature lurks within, that has already rifled the Tomb of its Hero; given the putrid Bones a new Grave; and waits only for the Approach of Night, to repeat his Dirge in Yells.—*Inſcriptions*, deſigned to perpetuate ſome illuſtrious Character, or eternize ſome heroic Deed, are blended in the promiſcuous Maſs. In vain, would the prying Antiquary ſearch for a legible or conſiſtent Sentence: in vain, attempt to find the memorable Names of a *Nebuchadnezzar* or a *Nimrod*. Theſe, though engraved on Plates of Braſs, or cut in Blocks of Marble, are loſt amidſt the ſtupendous Lumber; as Prints on the unſteady Sand are effaced, when returning Tides ſmooth the furrowed Beach.

Here and there a ſtraggling Cypreſs riſes, as it were with funeral Solemnity, amidſt the Waſte *. Somewhat like the black Plumes, nodding over the mournful Hearſe, they augment the Sadneſs of the Scene, and throw a deeper Horror on all below.—No human Voice is heard, nor human Face ſeen, amidſt theſe deſolated Heaps. Too dreary, even for the Roam of hoary Hermit, or the Cell of gloomy Monk. Abandoned they are, totally abandoned, to the

* *Rauwolf*, a *German* Traveler, who paſſed that Way, in the Year of our LORD 1574, ſays; "This Country "is ſo dry and barren, that it cannot be tilled; and ſo "bare, that I ſhould have doubted, whether the potent "*Babylon* did ſtand there, if I had not known it by ſeve-"ral antient and delicate Antiquities, that are ſtill ſtand-"ing hereabout in great Deſolation."

the Dominion of Solitude; or elſe, to the unmoleſted Reſort of ſhaggy Monſters, and feathered Hags; which ſtun the midnight Hours—*theſe*, with their importunate Shrieks—*thoſe*, with their execrable Howls.

See! to what a deſpicable, what an abhorred State, the proudeſt Monuments of earthly Grandeur, and the moſt coſtly Apparatus for earthly Felicity, may be reduced! A pregnant and alarming Proof, that, for *laſting Honour*, or *real Happineſs*,

They build too low, who build beneath the Skies.

Aſp. I very much approve the Choice of your Subject. The Ruins of *Perſepolis*, would have given Us a View of Magnificence in Abaſement. The Ruins of *Palmyra*, might have ſhewed Us Elegance in the Duſt. But the Ruins of *Babylon* diſplay at once, Magnificence and Elegance under an Eclipſe, *Scripture* and *Revelation* in their Glory.—The Deſtruction of this City, which was abſolutely unequaled * in every Inſtance of Dignity, and ſeemingly

* *Unequaled*—Repreſented therefore by the *golden* Head in *Nebuchadnezzar*'s prophetic Dream, and emblematic Image, *Dan.* ii. 38.—Deſcribed by an antient Author, as *Omnium quas unquam Sol aſpexit Urbium maxima.*—And moſt magnificently pourtrayed, together with its entire Demolition, in the Prophet's beautiful Draught. *Thou haſt made of a City, an Heap; of a defenced City, a Ruin; a Palace of Strangers, to be no City.—A City—a defenced City—a Palace*; ſo grand and ſtately, that it ſeemed like one continued Palace. Yet this incomparably grand City, ſhall become a *Heap* of Rubbiſh—a frightful and hideous *Ruin—no City*; nothing like it; without any Indication or Token, that it was ever inhabited. *Iſai.* xxv. 2.

ingly invincible by any Enemy, must certainly have been looked upon as the *most improbable* of Events. Nevertheless its utter Destruction was decreed by JEHOVAH, and denounced by his Prophet, several Ages before the Execution took place. The awful *Sentence* was not only denounced, but recorded; and is still remaining in the public Archives of our Religion.

Ther. Where is this Sentence recorded, and remaining?

Asp. In the Prophecy of *Isaiah*. And not only recorded, but in the most circumstantial Manner, and with a minute Detail of the horrible Desolations. These are the Words of the inspired Writer; BABYLON, *the Glory of Kingdoms, the Beauty of the Chaldees Excellency, shall be as when* GOD *overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited; neither shall it be dwelt in from Generation to Generation: Neither shall the Arabian pitch Tent there; neither shall the Shepherds make their Fold there. But wild Beasts of the Desart shall lie there, and their Houses shall be full of doleful Creatures, and Owls shall dwell there, and Satyrs shall dance there. And the wild Beasts of the Islands shall cry in their desolate Houses, and Dragons in their pleasant Palaces* *.

In the two first Sentences, is comprised the most finished Picture of Prosperity and Grandeur. *The Glory of Kingdoms*; beyond every other royal Seat, spacious, ornamented, and wealthy; revered by many conquered and tributary Dominions, as their Mistress, and their Sovereign.—*The Beauty of the Chaldees Excellency*: The *Chaldeans*, who excelled all the Nations of the Earth in Riches, in Splendor, and

* Isai. xiii. 19, 20, 21, 22.

and in Power, *even they* gloried in this imperial City. This was the higheſt Honour of the moſt illuſtrious, and chief Strength of the moſt victorious People; faireſt, where all was conſpicuouſly fair; nobleſt, where all was ſupereminently noble. —Yet this diſtinguiſhed, this crowning City, *ſhall*, at the blaſting of the Breath of JEHOVAH, *be* totally, totally deſtroyed, even *as when GOD overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.*

In deſcribing the Overthrow, the Prophet is equally admirable; and riſes, by a moſt judicious Gradation, into all the Pomp of Horror. *q. d.* "Now, indeed, it is thronged with Citizens; but, "the Hour is coming, when it ſhall be entirely "depopulated, and not ſo much as a ſingle Inha- "bitant left.—Leſt You ſhould think, that in Pro- "ceſs of Time it may be re-edified, and again "abound with joyful Multitudes, *it ſhall never be* "*inhabited* more; no, *never be dwelt in* any more, "*from Generation to Generation*; but ſhall continue "a diſmal Waſte, through all ſucceeding Ages.— "A Waſte ſo diſmal, that none of the neighbour- "ing *Shepherds* ſhall *make their Fold*, or find ſo "much as an occaſional Shelter for their Flocks; "where Kings, Grandees, and Crouds of affluent "Citizens, were wont to repoſe themſelves in pro- "found Tranquility. Even the rude and roving "*Arabian*, ſhall not venture to *pitch his Tent*, nor "be able to procure for Himſelf the poor Accom- "modation of a Night's Lodging; where Millions "of polite People baſked in the Sunſhine of profuſe "Proſperity.—In ſhort; it ſhall neither be habit- "able, nor acceſſible; but a *Dwelling-place for* "*Dragons, and a Court for Owls; an Aſtoniſhment,*

" *and a Hiſſing* *. What was once the *golden City* †, " and the Metropolis of the World, ſhall be an " everlaſting Scene of Deſolation; a fearful Mo- " nument of divine Vengeance, and an awful Ad- " monition to human Pride."

All this is foretold in Scripture; and, though to human Appearance impoſſible, though to human Apprehenſion incredible, was, in the appointed Time, moſt minutely accompliſhed. The Memorials and Evidences of the Accompliſhment remain to this very Day ‡. They are ſo *authentic*, that the moſt inquiſitive Curioſity cannot doubt; ſo *inconteſtable*, that the moſt bigotted Incredulity dares not deny. Should not all this teach Us, to reverence

* Jer. li. 37. † Iſai. xiv. 4.

‡ It is ſaid, by a very learned and ſagacious Author; *Babylonem uſque eo concidiſſe, ut Nemo cum Fiducia illius Locum amplius demonſtrare queat.* VITRINGA in *Iſai.*—Which Teſtimony is confirmed, and almoſt tranſlated, by a celebrated modern Traveler. " The Ruins of *Babylon* are " now ſo much effaced, that there are hardly any Veſ- " tiges of them, to point out their Situation." HANWAY's *Travels*, Vol. II.

Should my Readers prefer this Account, I ſhall neither litigate the Point, nor be anxious for the Conſequence. It may indeed rank *Eugenio*'s Compoſition among the Works of Fancy. But it will realize *Aſpaſio*'s Aſſertion, and corroborate his Argument. If We find *no Memorials* of the City, We have the *moſt evident* Verification, and the *fulleſt* Accompliſhment, of the Prophecy.

If this be the Caſe, it gives an amazing Emphaſis to that juſt, but terrible Decree, iſſued from the ſupreme Tribunal, *Iſai.* xiv. 23. *I will ſweep it with the Beſom of Deſtruction, ſaith the* LORD *of Hoſts.* " I will not only " lay it in Ruins, but extirpate it from the Earth. I " will efface the very Footſteps of its Exiſtence; and " not leave ſo much as a *Fragment* or a *Trace* of the mag- " nificent, but wicked *Babylon.*"—*Deſtroy Her utterly; let nothing of Her be left.* Jer. l. 26.

rence the Authority, to admire the Wisdom, and confide in the Promises, of that most sure and infallible Word!

I know, You are not fond of Compliments, *Theron*. Therefore, instead of speaking my Opinion of your Son's Performance, I will endeavour to return your Favour.—You have entertained me with an Account of the most memorable Ruins, extant in the material World. Let me present my Friend with a Picture of Ruins, no less *remarkable*, far more *deplorable*, and unspeakably *interesting* to Us all. I shall give it, in the Colouring of a great Master; whose Works, this very Day, I happened to be perusing.

The Passage displays a Doctrine, of the utmost Importance in the Christian Scheme; and by one of the finest Pieces of Imagery, to be met with in elegant Writing. I think, it may be looked upon, as a *practical Improvement* of *Eugenio*'s Declamation. It pleased me so much, that I transcribed it; and I make no Apology for reading it, because I shall expect your Thanks.—Only let me hint, that it considers the human Soul, as originally an Habitation of GOD through the SPIRIT; and then, speaking of its fallen Condition, proceeds.

"That He *hath withdrawn Himself*, and left "*this his Temple* desolate, We have many sad and "plain Proofs before Us. The *stately Ruins* are "visible to every Eye, that bear in their Front (yet "extant) this doleful Inscription; HERE GOD "ONCE DWELT. Enough appears of the admirable Frame and Structure of the *Soul of Man*, "to shew the divine Presence did sometime reside

" in it; more than enough of vicious *Deformity*, to " proclaim He is now *retired* and *gone*. The *Lamps* " are extinct, the *Altar* overturned; the *Light* and " *Love* are now vaniſhed, which did the one *ſhine*, " with ſo heavenly Brightneſs; the other *burn*, with " ſo pious Fervour. The *golden Candleſtick* is diſ- " placed, and thrown away as an uſeleſs Thing, to " make room for the Throne of the *Prince of Dark-* " *neſs*. The *ſacred Incenſe*, which ſent rolling up " in Clouds its rich Perfumes, is exchanged for a " poiſonous helliſh Vapour; and here is, *inſtead of* " *a ſweet Savour, a Stench*. The comely Order of " this Houſe is turned all into Confuſion. The " *Beauties of Holineſs* into *noiſome Impurities*. The " *Houſe of Prayer* to a *Den of Thieves*, and that of " the worſt and moſt horrid Kind; for every *Luſt* " is a *Thief*, and every *Theft* is *Sacrilege*. Con- " tinual Rapine and Robbery is committed upon " *holy Things*. The noble Powers, which were de- " ſigned and dedicated to *divine Contemplation* and " *Delight*, are alienated to the Service of the moſt " deſpicable Idols, and employed unto the vileſt " Intuitions and Embraces; to behold and admire " *lying Vanities*, to indulge and cheriſh Luſt and " Wickedneſs."

" There is not now a Syſtem, an entire Table " of *coherent Truths* to be found, or a *Frame of Ho-* " *lineſs*, but ſome ſhivered Parcels. How many " Attempts have been made, ſince that fearful Fall " and Ruin of this Fabric, to compoſe again the " Truths of ſo many ſeveral Kinds into their diſtinct " Orders, and make up Frames of Science or uſeful " Knowledge! and after ſo many Ages, nothing is " finiſhed in any Kind. Sometimes, Truths are

" miſplaced,

" misplaced, and what belongs to *one Kind*, is transferred to *another*, where it will not fitly match; " sometimes, *Falshood inserted*, which shatters or disturbs the whole Frame. And what with much " fruitless Pains, is done by one Hand, is dashed in " Pieces by another; and it is the Work of a *following* Age to sweep away the fine-spun Cobwebs " of a *former*. And those Truths, which are of " greatest Use, are least regarded; their Tendency " and Design are overlooked, or they are so loosened " and torn off, that they cannot be wrought in, so " as to take hold of the Soul; but hover as *faint* " *ineffectual Notions*, that signify Nothing. Its very " fundamental Powers are shaken and disjointed, " and their Order towards one another confounded " and broken. So that what is judged *considerable*, " is not *considered*; what is recommended as *eligible* " and *lovely*, is not loved and chosen. Yea, the " Truth which is after Godliness, is not so much " *disbelieved*, as *hated*, *held in Unrighteousness:* and " shines as too feeble a *Light*, in that malignant " Darkness, which *comprehends it not*. You come, " amidst all this Confusion, as into the ruined Palace of some great Prince, in which You see here " the Fragments of a noble Pillar, there the shattered Pieces of some curious Imagery: and all lying neglected and useless amongst Heaps of Dirt. " He that invites You to take a View of the Soul " of Man, gives You but such another Prospect, " and doth but say to You, *Behold the Desolation*, " all Things rude and waste. So that should there " be any Pretence to the divine Presence, it might " be said, *If GOD be here, why is it thus?* The " faded Glory, the Darkness, the Disorder, the

" Impurity, the decayed State in all Reſpects of " this Temple, too plainly ſhew, *The GREAT* " *INHABITANT is gone* *."

Ther. Your Painter, I muſt own, is a Maſter in his Profeſſion; and ſeems to have a peculiar Talent for a *Night-piece*.—But why, I beſeech You, ſo much of his Shades and Solemnity? Has He no Colours, but the dark? No Lineaments, but the ſour? Could He not allow Us one bright Tint, one ſmiling Feature? when He was copying the nobleſt Being in this ſublunary World?—Is it for the Honour of the great CREATOR, to give ſuch a deformed Draught of his moſt finiſhed Workmanſhip?

Aſp. It reflects no kind of Diſhonour upon the Architect of *Babylon*, that its Palaces are fallen, its Edifices demoliſhed, and its Walls leveled with the Ground. They might have been built with the exacteſt Symmetry, and once embelliſhed with every graceful Ornament; notwithſtanding the Stroke of Violence, or the Sap of Years, have now reduced them to Heaps of Rubbiſh.—The human Soul, when recent from the Inſpiration of the ALMIGHTY, was bright with Knowledge, amiable with Virtue, and in every Reſpect excellent. But *How*—to ſpeak in the Language of the mourning Prophet; a Language never more pertinent than on the preſent Occaſion—*How is the Gold become dim! How is the moſt fine Gold changed!*

Ther. Man's Soul is rational and eternal; is the Offſpring of the DEITY, and capable of reſembling its MAKER.

Aſp.

* See Mr. Howe's Treatiſe, intitled *The living Temple.*

Aſp. What *Milton* allows to the fallen Archangel, I can readily allow to fallen Man:

> ——— *He had not loſt*
> *All his original Brightneſs, nor appear'd*
> *Leſs than Archangel ruin'd.*

The grand and diſtinguiſhing Faculties of the Soul remain; ſo as to beſpeak a Child of Glory ruined. When a Fountain is poiſoned, the Waters continue to flow: but flow no longer with *Health*, flow rather with *Death* in the Stream. Theſe very Faculties, unleſs renewed and regulated by the Influence of Religion, muſt be our preſent Miſery, and will prove our everlaſting Curſe.—"The Soul," You ſay, "is rational, is eternal." And do not even the Devils poſſeſs the Powers of Reaſon? Is not *their* Exiſtence alſo of an endleſs Duration? Yet are they, of all Creatures, the moſt execrable and the moſt miſerable.

You call the human Soul, the Offspring of the DEITY. And You call it properly. Muſt We not then adopt the Prophet's Exclamation, "*How "art Thou fallen, O Lucifer, Son of the Morning* *!" How art Thou degenerated, O Man, Son of the "MOST HIGH! Thy glorious Original ſerves "only to ſet forth, with more glaring Evidence, "thy deplorable Apoſtacy."

Capable, You add, of reſembling its MAKER. This, I acknowledge, is a valuable Prerogative. In this the infernal Spirits have no Share. But this Capacity will always lie dormant; will never awaken

* Iſai. xiv. 12.

into Act; never be eſtabliſhed in Habit; unleſs Almighty GRACE intervene.

Ther. The moſt celebrated Philoſophers of Antiquity, frequently exhort their Readers to *follow Nature*; as a certain Guide to true Excellence.—Many eloquent Writers of our own Country, enlarge upon the *Dignity* of human Nature; and from this Topic derive very forcible Arguments, for a correſpondent Dignity both of Sentiment and Behaviour.—Upon what can thoſe Principles of the antient Sages, and of our later Moraliſts, be founded?

Aſp. Indeed, *Theron*, I am at a loſs to tell. If they have any Foundation, it is merely imaginary; not laid in Truth, nor confirmed by Experience.—According to my Apprehenſion, they invert the Order of Things. They take that for a *Poſtulatum*, which ought to be ranked among the *Deſiderata*; and make an Axiom of a mere Figment.

Had Man continued, as He was created; to act according to Nature, and according to the Law of GOD, would have been one and the ſame Thing. For which Reaſon, We find no Precepts of Religion, no Delineation of Morality, given to *Adam* in Paradiſe. Becauſe, Religion and Morality were engraven on his Heart: or rather, they reſulted from the very Bent and Tendency of his perfect Frame.—But ſince the Fall, it is quite otherwiſe.

Ther. Have not many of the antient Worthies been *living Confutations* of your Opinion? Wiſe Philoſophers, judicious Lawgivers, and ſteady Miniſters of Juſtice? Their Deſires refined, their Affections benevolent, their whole Conduct upright.

Aſp. I cannot forbear wondering, that You ſhould inſtance in Lawgivers and Miniſters of Juſtice. Since

Since the very Inſtitution of their Office *preſuppoſes* the Depravity of Mankind. Was human Nature agitated by no irregular or vicious Inclinations, the Barrier of Laws would be as needleſs in civil Societies, as the vaſt Banks of *Holland* are needleſs in our upland Counties.

But this, You will ſay, is a digreſſive Obſervation. Your Queſtion requires a poſitive Anſwer. And it is eaſy to anſwer, That the Painting is beyond the Life. If my Author has been too free with the *dark*, my Friend has been too laviſh of the *glittering* Colours.—Thoſe famous Men might aim, perhaps, at the Excellency You deſcribe. Not one of them came up to the Mark.—Or, ſuppoſe they did, this would not invalidate my Tenet.

Ther. This not invalidate your Tenet! Then Demonſtration carries no Conviction.

Aſp. Pray, who is your greateſt Favourite, among all the renowned Perſons of Antiquity?

Ther. Socrates.—He ſtands at the Head of the Claſs; and was, indiſputably, the wiſeſt and the beſt of the Heathen World.

Aſp. I think ſo too.—Be pleaſed, however, to recollect the Story of the *Phyſiognomiſt*; who pretended to diſcover the Diſpoſition of the Mind, by the Caſt of the Countenance. The Profeſſor of this occult Science undertook, You know, to exerciſe his Skill upon *Socrates*; and pronounced Him, after an Examination of his Features, laſcivious, paſſionate, and moroſe.—This Judgment, ſo extravagantly wide of the Truth, was bringing a Storm of Ridicule and Reſentment upon the poor Fortune-teller. When the ingenuous Philoſopher interpoſed, and owned the Deſcription to be exactly true. That

ſuch was his *natural* Temper; and if his Converſation was of a different Turn, it was owing to the Aids of Philoſophy.—So that, even in your moſt finiſhed * Character, there was no innate Dignity. All was *adventitious*.

Ther. If Corruption was derived unto all Men from their Forefather *Adam*; methinks, all ſhould be equally corrupt. But this is contrary to known Fact. Some We ſee naturally loving and lovely; gentle in their Manners; and ſubject to no inordinate Appetites.

Aſp. Some Perſons may be of *more gentle*, or, if You pleaſe, of *leſs diſſolute* Manners, than the Generality of other People. Thanks to a better Temperature

* Though I love and admire the Character of *Socrates*, yet I cannot approve the whole of his Conduct. One Thing which gives me particular Offence is, the *habitual* Practice of *Swearing*, which occurs in all his Conferences with his Pupils. Μα τον Δια, Νη Δι', or ſome ſuch Appeal to the DEITY is uſed, not only in every Diſcourſe, but almoſt in every Page; and that upon the moſt *unneceſſary* Occaſions.—I have often wondered, that ſo polite a Writer as *Xenophon*, ſhould admit this flagrant Impropriety into his Dialogues. Which, beſides its *irreligious* Air, is ſomewhat like the *Crambe repetita*; and recurs, and recurs, and recurs, till it is really tireſome. But much more I wonder, that his excellent Maſter, ſhould ſuffer the Sanction of an Oath, to become ſo *trivial*; and make the Honour of his *Jupiter*, ſo *cheap*.

This proves the deplorable *Blindneſs* of human Reaſon; which could miſtake ſo notorious a Profanation of the Divine Name, for a genteel Embelliſhment of Speech—It ſhews Us, likewiſe, our extreme Need of that *revealed* Law, which, among other refined Precepts, unknown to the Religion of Nature, enjoins; *Above all Things, ſwear not*—And *Thou ſhalt not take the Name of the* LORD *thy* GOD *in vain*.

perature of their Conſtitution, or a more watchful Care in their Education.—Politeneſs may mimick Charity, or fine Breeding may perſonate Humility. One vile Affection may check another, or a Senſe of Decency may hold Curb upon all.—But ſhew me the unregenerate Man, who is ſubject to no inordinate Appetites. When the very beſt unregenerate Man, that ever lived, acknowledges concerning Himſelf; *Sin*, original Corruption, *wrought in me all Manner of Concupiſcence* *. And even the *Stoic* Philoſopher cannot but confeſs, *Omnia in Omnibus Vitia ſunt* †.

Ther. Have We not often obſerved heroic Courage, and a Generoſity of Spirit, where the Education has been none of the ſtricteſt? To what can we aſcribe theſe laudable Qualities, but to the innate Virtue and Nobleneſs of the Temper, working without any auxiliary Succours?

Aſp. Virtue, *Theron*, is a *complete* Aſſemblage, not ſome *disjointed* Shreds, of laudable Qualities. Thoſe You mention, if not accompanied with the whole Circle of amiable Accompliſhments, are no more to be called Virtue; than two or three ſcattered Fragments of an Edifice, are to be honoured with the Appellation of an Houſe.—How often are thoſe very Perſons, with all their Fortitude, Slaves to ignoble Pleaſures, or in Bondage to the baſeſt Luſts. A moſt infallible Indication, that they have no *uniform* Generoſity, nor any *real* Courage.—Deſire of Fame, may prompt to many ſuch Acts, as *dazzle* the ſuperficial Eye: which yet are far, very far from *genuine* Virtue.

Ther. Do You then attribute the *Grecian* Politeneſs and the high *Roman* Spirit, with all the gallant

* Rom. vii. 8. † Sen. *De Ben.* Lib. IV.

Actions of their Heroes and their Generals, to a Deſire of Fame?

Aſp. There is Reaſon to ſuſpect, that they derived their Origin from ſome improper Motive. And no Motive was more artfully inſtilled, or more aſſiduouſly cheriſhed, than the Spirit of Ambition.—View their Crowns, their Statues, their triumphal Solemnities—Read their Orators, their Hiſtorians, their Poets—The former were the *School*, the latter were the *Maſters*, to inculcate this grand Leſſon.

Let Us conſider the *Romans* a little more attentively; and not amidſt the Dregs of their Community, but in their very beſt Ages; when their Republic ſubſiſted, and their *Scipios* flouriſhed. Many great and ſhining Deeds were undoubtedly performed. But did they ſpring from a *reverential Regard* to the Supreme BEING; from Obedience to his Will, or Zeal for his Honour?

If this Principle ſhould be thought too refined, did they proceed from a *Love* to their *Fellow-creatures?* In caſe, neither of theſe Motives * actuated their Conduct, it can never be placed to the Account of Virtue.—Had Benevolence been their leading Principle, why ſuch *Inhumanity* to *Carthage?* Why muſt that opulent City be laid in Aſhes, and her

* A Zeal for the Honour of GOD, and a Concern for the Good of our Fellow-creatures, are the true Sources of Virtue, 1 *Cor.* x. 24, 31. When our Actions flow not from theſe Principles, Reaſon will put a *Query* upon them, and Revelation will *expunge* them from the Liſt of Virtues.—They may be ſpecious in themſelves; they may be coſtly to the Performer; they may even be ſerviceable to Others. But can no more deſerve the Title of *Virtue*, than the Activity of our Sun-fire Officers, in extinguiſhing the Flames on ſome inſured Houſe, can merit the Name of *Charity*.

her numerous Citizens be put to the Sword? Were they Enemies to Mankind, or a Nuiſance in the World? You well know, that they were only too induſtrious, and too powerful. By which Means, they would be in a Condition, to eclipſe the Magnificence of the *Roman* Name, and diſpute the Prize of Sovereignty with the *Roman* State. For this Crime—a Crime in Ambition's Eye, abſolutely inexcuſable—even *Cato*'s upright Soul, ſhall doom them to utter Deſtruction; and *Scipio*'s gentle Hand, ſhall execute the horrid Decree.

Is *this* Virtue? Does Virtue ravage Countries, from the mere Wantonneſs of Pride, or Luſt of Preeminence? Does Virtue deſtroy Millions of Lives, only to aggrandize a particular People, or extend the Dominion of ſome favourite Empire? If *this* were Virtue, *Brutus* thought too honourably of her Character, when he termed Her an *empty Name*.—I am ſure, my *Theron* has juſter Notions of Things. He need not be informed, that true Virtue, far from perſonating the rapacious Harpy, acts as a Father to Others, as a Father to all. And, like HIM, who is both its Pattern and its Author, *goes about doing Good*.

Ther. The moſt elegant Cane, if plunged into yonder Baſon, while the Waters are curled by the Breeze, will appear both crooked and coarſe. I cannot but think, the Accuſers of human Nature examine her State with a *prejudiced* Underſtanding. Which has the ſame perverſe Effect upon their Judgment, as thoſe ruffled Waves have upon the Sight. —Or elſe, they contemplate her Condition with a *melancholy* Mind; which, like a jaundiced Eye, gives

every Object a diſtempered Aſpect; darkens the chearful; diſcolours the beautiful; and hangs even the Sun in Mourning.

Aſp. Rather let this be the Compariſon, to illuſtrate our Point.—View the meaneſt Piece of Earth, through the *Priſmatic* Glaſs; and it will appear, not beautiful only, but perfectly ſplendid. Remove the deluſory Medium, and all the ſophiſticated Finery vaniſhes. The Indigo, the Orange, the Violet are gone: and leave nothing to be ſeen, but a rude unornamented Lump of Clay.—So, if We conſider human Nature, according to the *partial* Repreſentations of Self-love; or contemplate it, in the *flattering* Mirrour of ſome popular Writings; it may ſeem regular, holy, excellent. But, if We behold it under the Light, the unerring Light of Revelation, its fanſied Charms diſappear; it ſtands clothed with Deformity; and is a Spectacle of Commiſeration, if not of Horrour.

Ther. What Reaſon have You to father ſuch a Notion upon the ſacred Writings?—The ſacred Writings inform Us, that Man was made *after the Image of GOD.* This, ſure, could not be ſo diſhonourable and depraved a Pattern, as your Diſcourſe would inſinuate.

Aſp. Far, very far from a diſhonourable Pattern! The Image of GOD is the *conſummate Standard* of all Perfection.—In Conformity to this admirable Exemplar, our firſt Parents were created; and in this admirable Condition they continued, till by Tranſgreſſion they *fell.* Fell from the moſt holy and happy State, into Guilt, Condemnation, and Ruin.—Therefore, when this fatal Cataſtrophe had taken place, the ſacred Hiſtorian varies his Style;

and with a remarkable Peculiarity, as well as Propriety of Speech, ſays, *Adam begat a Son in his own* *; not in the DIVINE, *Likeneſs*. That every Reader may advert to this melancholy, but important Truth; it is marked more ſtrongly ſtill; it is enforced by a very emphatical Repetition. *After his own Image* †, now fallen and corrup ed; and therefore contradiſtinguiſhed to the Image of GOD, mentioned in a preceding Verſe. Which Expreſſions are evidently intended, to denote the Difference between the State, in which *Adam* was created, and *Seth* was begotten.

Ther. Pray, let me have a ſucciné, but full Account of this tragical Story. Since all your orthodox Divines lay ſuch a mighty Streſs upon the Doctrine of the *Fall*.

Aſp. GOD, having formed the human Body out of the Ground, animated the Structure with a living Soul; and tranſcribed upon this Soul the Image of his bleſſed SELF. All was Light in the Underſtanding; all was Rectitude in the Will; and nothing but Harmony in the Affections.—Man, thus endowed, was placed in the delightful Garden of *Eden*; and furniſhed with every Accommodation, which was neceſſary to ſupport his Being, or deſirable to gratify his Senſes.—He was conſtituted Lord of this lower Creation, and, amidſt numberleſs Indulgences, received only *one—eaſy—negative* Command—*not to eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.*—From this He was to abſtain, as a Pledge

* This is affirmed, not of *Cain*, but of *Seth*, the moſt excellent of *Adam*'s Children, and Father of the holy Seed.

† בדמותו כצלמו Gen. v. 3.

Pledge of his Subjection, and as an Exercise of his Obedience. Bliss and Immortality were to be the Reward of Duty; Misery and Death the Punishment of Disobedience. *In the Day Thou eatest thereof, Thou shalt surely die* *, was the Sanction of the divine Law.

How equitable! How gracious the Terms! Yet, neither the Goodness of GOD, could induce Him to keep them; nor the Authority of GOD, deter Him from breaking them.—Unreasonably discontented even with such advantageous Circumstances, and presumptuously aspiring to be like the MOST HIGH, He hearkened to the Suggestions of the evil Spirit.—In a Word; He violated the Precept, and incurred the Penalty. GOD was just, and Man was undone. He lost his Uprightness †; became subject to Mortality; and, as the nervous Original expresses it, *Died the Death.*

Ther. True; He became subject to many bodily Infirmities, and to the Necessity of final Dissolution. —But, what has this Sentence, or what have these Sufferings to do with *your* Notion of universal Depravity in the Mind? The Death, which the Almighty LEGISLATOR threatened, can be opposed only to the Life, which the Almighty CREATOR gave.

Asp. Be it so.—The CREATOR gave, and Man possessed a Life, incomparably more excellent, than that which the Pulse imparts, or the Beasts enjoy.

* Gen. ii. 17.

† ——— *Innocence, that as a Veil*
Had shadow'd them from knowing Ill, was gone,
Just Confidence, and native Righteousness.
MILT. Book IX. 1054.

joy. He poſſeſſed a *divine Life*. Which, according to the Definition of the Apoſtle, conſiſted *in Knowledge, in Righteouſneſs, and true Holineſs* *. This—which was the diſtinguiſhing Glory, and the ſupreme Felicity of his Nature—this, alas! was extinct.

His Underſtanding, originally enlightened with Wiſdom, was clouded and overwhelmed with Ignorance.—His Heart, once filled with religious Veneration, and warmed with heavenly Love, became alienated from GOD, his MAKER.—His Paſſions and Appetites, rational and regular before, ſhook off the Government of Order and Reaſon. The whole moral Frame was unhinged, disjointed, broken; or, in other Words, *the Life of GOD* was departed from the Soul.

Ther. What Cauſe have You to ſuppoſe, that all this Miſery was either included in the Threatening, or introduced by the Fall?

Aſp. The *Ignorance* of fallen *Adam* was palpable. Witneſs that abſurd Attempt, to hide Himſelf from the Eye of OMNISCIENCE †, among the Trees of the Garden.—His *Averſion* to the All-gracious GOD was equally plain. Otherwiſe, He would never have fled from his MAKER; but rather have haſted, and on the Wings of Deſire, into the Place of the divine Manifeſtation.

A ſtrange Variety of *diſorderly Paſſions* ‡, were evidently predominant in his Breaſt—*Pride*; for He refuſes

* *Eph.* iv, 24. *Col.* iii. 10. This is what *Moſes* calls, *The Image of GOD.*

† Ποσης εκ αν ειη τυφλοτητος; τον Θεον, τον πανταχη παρονθα, τον τα λανθανοντα επισαμενον, τυφλον κρυπτεσθαι επιχειρειν; Chryſoſt.

‡ *Milton*, ſpeaking of the unhappy Pair, and deſcribing the Conſequences of their Fall, ſays:

——*Nor*

refuſes to acknowledge his Guilt, though He cannot but own the Fact—*Ingratitude*; for He obliquely upbraids the CREATOR with his Gift, as though it had been a Snare, rather than a Bleſſing; *The Woman, whom* Thou *gaveſt me—Want of natural Affection*; for He endeavours to caſt all the Blame upon the weaker Veſſel; and to acquit his obnoxious Self, by impeaching the Wife of his Boſom.—The female Criminal acts the ſame unhumbled Part. She neither takes Shame to Herſelf; nor gives Glory to GOD; nor puts up a ſingle Petition for Pardon.

As all theſe Diſaſters enſued, upon the Breach of the Commandment; they furniſh Us, I think, with the beſt *Key* to open the Meaning of the prohibitory Sanction. They prove, beyond any Argument, that ſpiritual Death, and all its Conſequences, were comprehended in the Extent of the Threatening.

Ther. How could *one* Act of Diſobedience produce ſuch deſtructive Effects? Eraſe the fair Image of the GODHEAD; and ſtamp the Monſter, ſtamp the very Devil, in its Stead?—And ſo *ſmall* an Act of Diſobedience too!

Aſp.

——————— *Nor only Tears*
Rain'd at their Eyes; but high Winds within
Began to riſe; high Paſſions, Anger, Hate,
Miſtruſt, Suſpicion, Diſcord, and ſhook ſore
Their inward State of Mind; calm Region once,
And full of Peace; now toſt and turbulent!
For, Underſtanding ruled not, and the Will
Heard not her Lore! But, in Subjection now
To ſenſual Appetite, who from beneath
Uſurping, over ſovereign Reaſon claim'd
Superior Sway.

Book IX. 1121.

Aſp. The *Prohibition*, if You pleaſe, was ſmall; not ſo the Tranſgreſſion. It was committed againſt the cleareſt Knowledge of Duty, and the ſtrongeſt Obligations to Obedience. It argued Ingratitude for the richeſt Favours, and Unbelief of the moſt ſolemn Declarations. It was an Act of the moſt horrid Preſumption in the Creature, and of the moſt impious Rebellion againſt the CREATOR.

As to the Smallneſs, or rather the *gentle* and *benign* Import of the Command, this aggravates, beyond Meaſure, the Crime of Diſobedience. Alluding to the Words, once addreſſed to the *Syrian* General, we may juſtly expoſtulate—"O thou *Adam*, "if thy LORD had bid Thee do ſome great "Thing *; in Submiſſion to his high Authority, "and out of Gratitude for his unſpeakable Good-"neſs, oughteſt Thou not to have done it? How "much more, when He ſays to Thee?—Freely eat "of all, except this ſingle Tree. *Thouſands*, *Thou-"ſands* of Honours, Privileges, and Gifts be thine; "only *one* Acknowledgment of thy Subjection, "mine. And that the *eaſieſt*, which thy Heart can "wiſh, or even thy Fancy conceive."

You aſk, *How* could one Act of Diſobedience produce ſuch deſtructive Effects?—I anſwer; The *Reality* of the Fact, in numberleſs Inſtances of material Nature, is plain to a Demonſtration; while the *Manner* of Operation, remains an impenetrable Secret. Every Child perceives the former; *Newton* himſelf is at a loſs for the latter.—For which Reaſon, I have always thought it better, to believe what GOD has taught, than attempt to explain, what GOD has concealed. Let us forego this curious,

* 2 Kings v. 13.

curious, perhaps fruitleſs Enquiry; and ſubſtitute a Remark, which naturally ariſes from the Subject, and may conſiderably edify our Minds.

Ther. Edify! Is it poſſible to render this diſhonourable and afflictive Notion *edifying?* Can any generous Fruit ſpring from ſuch a penurious Soil?

Aſp. Samſon, I believe, had no Expectation of finding any Thing valuable, in the Reliques of his ſlain Lion. But, to his agreeable Diſappointment, *there was Honey in the Carcaſe* *. If our Doctrine appear *ghaſtly* as the One, it may yield a Benefit *ſweet* as the Other.

From hence We may learn (what, when rightly learnt, is more ſerviceable than all the Sciences) the *extreme Malignity* of Sin.—When *Volcanos* open their tremendous Jaws, and diſgorge a fiery Inundation; they confine their Fury to a ſingle Territory.—When *Famine* lifts her mildewed Hand, and deſtroys the Supports of animal Life; She is content with ruining a Kingdom or a Nation.—When *War* drenches his Sword in Blood, or the *Peſtilence* impregnates the Air with Poiſon; they alſo, even they obſerve ſome Limits, and never make the whole Compaſs of Nature the Scene of their Ravages.—But *Sin* leveled its Blow at the whole human Race. SIN poured Contagion, and ſpread Deſtruction, through all Countries, and all Ages. One *ſingle* Act of Sin brought Confuſion and a Curſe upon the material, and Miſeries, infinite Millions of Miſeries, on the rational World †.—How then ſhould We fear this moſt

* Judg. xiv. 8.

† St. *Chryſoſtom* calls the firſt Tranſgreſſion, η πασῶν ἀμαρτιῶν ἀμαρτία. Which is, in a Manner, tranſlated by

moſt horrible and pernicious of all Evils! With what Carefulneſs guard againſt its inſidious Allurements! With what Reſolution fly from its killing Careſſes!

Ther. I muſt obſerve, *Aſpaſio*, that You take for granted, what remains to be proved. For, ſuppoſing your Account true, with regard to *Adam*; yet, how does this affect his Children? Why muſt all his Poſterity be contaminated, becauſe their Forefather has played the Prodigal? Such a heavy Charge againſt the whole Body of Mankind will not be admitted, without very cogent Proofs.

Aſp. The Proofs are cogent; perhaps irrefragable.

Poetry, addreſſing fallen *Adam*, is very clear in her Depoſition:

> ——— *They, who never touch'd*
> *Th' excepted Tree, nor with the Snake conſpir'd,*
> *Nor ſinn'd thy Sin, yet from that Sin derive*
> *Corruption* *.

Reaſon offers to turn Evidence in the Caſe. Reaſon, in Concurrence with Revelation, demands; *Who can bring a clean Thing out of an unclean* †? If the Fountain be polluted, how can the Streams be pure? And if the Root is corrupt, 'tis impoſſible to

by *Milton*; who, ſpeaking of the ſame tragical Act, ſays

> ——— *It*
> *Brought Death into the World, and all our Woe.*

* MILTON. † Job xiv. 4.

conceive, how the Branches ſhould be ſound, or the Fruit good *.

The ſcriptural Teſtimonies are almoſt innumerable. They pour their Evidence from every Quarter; and conſtitute, not two or three only, but a whole Cloud of Witneſſes.—*GOD made Man upright*, ſays the royal Preacher. The human Nature in its primitive State, was all Regularity, and without any improper Biaſs. *But*, ever ſince the firſt Tranſgreſſion, Men have been inclined to Evil. And, in Conſequence of this Depravity, *they have ſought out many Inventions* †.—Don't You obſerve the very peculiar, and no leſs ſignificant, Structure of the Language? *GOD made*, not He *makes*. *Man*, at his firſt Creation; not *Men*, in their ſucceſſive Generations. Then *He* was wiſe and holy; now *they* are fooliſh and depraved. Our Nature, as proceeding from a gracious CREATOR, was without Fault and without Defect; but as propagated from a fallen Parent, is unhappily altered. *Fuimus Troes*.

Ther. I don't deny, but Multitudes of People, ſeduced by bad *Example*, or betrayed by their own *Inadvertency*, have departed from the Rule of Duty. Have,

* *Milton* has anticipated *Theron*'s Objection; and, in *Adam*'s Soliloquy, very judiciouſly ſolved it.

——————— *Ah! why ſhould all Mankind*
For one *Man's Fault*, *thus guiltleſs* be condemn'd,
If guiltleſs? But from me what can proceed
But all corrupt, both Body and Mind deprav'd;
Not to do only, but to will the ſame
With me! How can they acquitted ſtand
In Sight of GOD? Book X. 822.

† Eccleſ. vii. 29.

Have, as the wise Man affirms, tried many foolish Experiments to acquire Happiness, and devised as many idle Excuses for their Folly. But, this is no such irrefragable Proof, that their very Nature was depraved. It only implies, that, not taking proper heed to their Ways, they warped from their native Uprightness. As yonder *Tulips*, though perfectly beautiful at present, if not attended with the necessary Cultivation, will degenerate into homely Flowers; and, at length, be no better than tawdry Weeds.

Asp. No, my Friend. Iniquity is not an adventitious Thing, catched from Example, or contracted by Carelessness. These may increase, but these do not occasion, the *moral Malady*. A sinful Disposition is early as our Being: is the very Mould, in which all our Faculties are cast.—*David* bears very express Testimony to this humbling Truth. *Behold!* He sets his *N. B.* * upon the Passage. 'Tis a sad, but certain Fact. Such as should never depart from my Memory, nor ever be omitted in my Confessions. *I was shapen in Wickedness, and in Sin did my Mother conceive me* †. As though he had said —"Alas! LORD, this Crime, though extremely "horrid, is but a little Part of my Guilt. I have

* I need not inform my Readers, that *N. B.* points out the special Importance of a Passage, and is a Call for peculiar Attention. An Observation of another Kind may, perhaps, be more worthy of their Notice. That *David* sets not the distinguishing Mark upon his actual Transgressions, but upon his original Sin. As that, which was the fatal Source of all; should cause the deepest Humiliation in Himself; and should be most attentively regarded by the Reader.

† Psal. li. 5.

" not only ſinned in Practice, but I am totally and " univerſally corrupt in my very Nature."

This He acknowledges, not to extenuate his Offence, but to lay open his exceſſive Vileneſs. And indeed it is not poſſible, to form a *right Judgment* of Ourſelves, or to be *duly humbled* before GOD, unleſs We add the Depravation of our Nature to the Tranſgreſſions of our Life. Juſt as it is impoſſible to diſcern, what monſtrous and voracious Animals lie hid in the Ocean, if We only glance an Eye upon the Surface of the Waters.

Ther. This, You know, was written by the royal Penitent, under the Pangs of a ſevere Remorſe. Does not a Senſe of his enormous Iniquity, together with the Apprehenſion of divine Wrath, cauſe his Hand to ſhake, and lead Him to *aggravate* Features?—Or, ſuppoſe it were true of the adulterous King, is it equally applicable to Others, who have eſcaped ſuch groſs Pollutions?

Aſp. It is no exaggerating Draught, but a faithful Delineation; and exactly repreſents every Child of *Adam.*—It was written with the utmoſt Deliberation; and therefore is introduced with that Call for peculiar Attention, *Behold!*—And, though *David* was ſcandalouſly criminal in his Intrigue with the Wife of *Uriah*; yet, the *general* Tenour of his Life was not only irreproachable, but exemplary. Who ſo zealous for the Houſe of GOD, or ſo devoted an Admirer of the divine Word? His Heart was an Altar, ever flaming with heavenly Love; and his Tongue a Trumpet, to ſound the Praiſes of JEHOVAH through all Generations.—And if *He* had Reaſon to make this abaſing Confeſſion; who

is

is the Perſon, that can think Himſelf aggrieved, by ſharing in the Imputation?

One of our moſt eminent Martyrs *, when He heard of any Malefactor, condemned to ſuffer an ignominious Death, uſed to lay his Hand upon his Breaſt, and ſay—"The Seeds of all thoſe Villanies, "which brought that unhappy Wretch to the Gib-"bet, were ſown *Here*. If they have not ſprung "up into the ſame deteſtable Deeds, unto divine "Grace, unto divine Grace *alone*, be all the "Glory!"

Ther. Your Martyrs had honeſt Hearts, but not always the cleareſt Heads. I admire their Zeal, and reverence their Memories. But I can no more receive their Opinion as an Oracle, than I can be perſuaded to worſhip their Relics.

Aſp. I have no Intention to palm Popery on my Friend, nor any Deſire to calumniate the human Species. If it be diſingenuous and ſinful, to aſperſe a particular Character; how much more unjuſtifiable, to traduce our Nature in general!

My Account, dark and diſguſtful as it is, ſtands confirmed by a higher Authority, than any private Opinion. It is confirmed from an univerſal *Survey* of Mankind; taken by the Eye of the CREATOR Himſelf, and left upon Record in the Books of Revelation. *The LORD looked down from Heaven upon the Children of Men, to ſee if there were Any that did underſtand, and ſeek after GOD.*—What is the Reſult of this grand Enquiry? It muſt, without all Peradventure, be infallibly true. Becauſe GOD's Inſpection is too keen, to be eluded; and his Judgment too impartial, to be biaſſed. This is

* Mr. *Bradford.*

the Report, made by the infinitely wiſe OBSERVER: *They are all gone aſide, they are all together become filthy* *; *there is None that doeth Good, no not One.*

Ther. This, I apprehend, is the Character of thoſe beſotted Creatures, thoſe moſt egregious of all Fools, *Who ſay, There is no GOD.* To them the *Pſalm* relates, and to them the abandoned Character is appropriated. They have it, if I may ſo ſpeak, *Cum Privilegio.*

Aſp. It is meant rather of practical, than of ſpeculative Atheiſts; who ſay, if not *explicitly* with their Mouths, yet *implicitly* in their Hearts, There is no GOD. Who live, as if there was no ALL-SEEING EYE, to take Cognizance of their preſent Conduct; no Supreme JUDGE, to call them to a future Reckoning.—Now I dare appeal to Yourſelf, though perhaps the fondeſt of Fathers, Whether this Inſtance of *Fooliſhneſs, is not bound up in the Hearts of our Children* †. Nay, I dare appeal to

* *Pſal.* xiv. 2, 3. The two original Words סר נאלחו are metaphorical Expreſſions; taken from—*Wines*, that are become *ſour*—and *Meats*, that are in a State of *Putrefaction.* I believe, it is impoſſible to find Images, more ſtrongly expreſſive of a *total* Depravity, and of the utmoſt Degeneracy. Yet both theſe Images St. *Paul* has comprehended in one Word; διεφθαρμενον τον νεν. 1 Tim. vi. 5.

† *Prov.* xxii. 15. Let None think, that by *Fooliſhneſs* the ſacred Writer means only thoſe *ſilly* Tricks, which diſcover a Weakneſs of Underſtanding in Children. *Solomon*'s Fool is not the *Idiot*, but the *Sinner*; and the Folly, ſtigmatized throughout the *Proverbs*, denotes, not a Failure in the intellectual, but in the religious and moral Character.

to any unprejudiced Perſon; Whether it be not natural to Us all, both in Youth and Manhood, to forget our CREATOR?

In this Caſe, *Theron*, there is no Monopoly. Your Right and mine, are too ſtrongly eſtabliſhed by Experience, and too clearly expreſſed in the preceding Scripture, to admit of any Controverſy.—If there were *Any*, that underſtood—They are *all* gone out of the Way—There is *None*, that doeth Good—No, not *One*.—Could any Conveyancer in *Europe* have contrived a Form of Words, more fully to aſcertain our unhappy Title?

Ther. There may be ſome Texts in Scripture, which ſeem to countenance your Aſſertion. But theſe refer to the worſt of Men, in the worſt of Times. And can You, with any Juſtice, aſcribe the Properties of a few Reprobates to the whole Species?

Aſp. This very Paſſage, and others of a like Import, are adopted by St. *Paul*, and applied both to *Jews* and *Gentiles*; with this profeſſed Deſign, *that* every *Mouth may be ſtopped, and all the World may be found guilty* * *before GOD*. Which evinces, I

 ſhould

The Words, in this Paſſage, are peculiarly forcible. *Fooliſhneſs is in the Heart*; implanted in the very Nature; ſunk deep into the inmoſt Faculties.—And not only ſunk deep, but adheres almoſt inſeparably: קשורה is *wrapt, tied*, and *bound:* twines like the Ivy, and is rooted like the Oak.

* *Rom.* iii. 19. Υποδικος γενηται, "May *become* guilty," does not ſo exactly anſwer the Scope of the Context, neither does it ſo ſolidly eſtabliſh the Apoſtle's Argument, as "may be *found* guilty;" be fully convicted, and apparently liable to moſt juſt Condemnation.—Thoſe Things were written of Old, and were quoted by St. *Paul*, not to *render* Men criminal, but to *prove* them ſo,

ſhould think, beyond all Doubt, the *Univerſality* of its Extent.

If to the Univerſality, We add the *Antiquity* of this Fact, it will bear the two grand Characteriſtics of Truth. Far from being a novel Opinion, it was received as a Maxim, in the early Age of *Job*. *What is Man, that He ſhould* pretend to *be clean? And He that is born of a Woman, that He ſhould* preſume to *be righteous?* Righteous before the infinitely JUST and HOLY ONE! *Behold! He putteth no Truſt in his Saints*, though the moſt exalted of all intelligent Beings. *Yea, the Heavens*, thoſe brighteſt Parts of the material Creation, *are not clean in his Sight. How much more abominable and filthy is Man*? Who drinketh Iniquity*; though lotheſome to GOD, and worſe than Poiſon to his own Soul; yet drinketh it *like Water*; without any Heſitation or the leaſt Fear, with an eager and profuſe Delight.

This, You will obſerve, was alledged in a Diſpute, carried on with no ſmall Vehemency. Yet is admitted, on all Hands, as unexceptionably true.—Be pleaſed alſo to take Notice, That the Charge is not confined to ſome very notorious Sinners, but is laid againſt the whole Body of Mankind. Whatever Figure they may make, each in his own Conceit; they are all deſcribed in the Word of GOD—as *Beings*, inſatiably athirſt after Evil—from *Objects*, which We cannot endure to behold; or cannot behold

* *Job* xv. 14, 15, 16. The immaculate Purity of the bleſſed GOD, and the utter Depravity of fallen Man, are Points of ſo great Importance in the ſcriptural Syſtem of Divinity, that they are inculcated no leſs than *three Times*, within the Compaſs of this ſingle Book. And by much the *ſame* noble Contraſt of ſtriking Images. *Chap.* iv. 17, 18.—xv. 14, 15, 16.—xxv. 4, 5, 6.

hold without Abhorrence *.—*Such* is Man by Nature! People muſt have Eyes very different from mine, to diſcern any *Dignity* in this Draught.

Ther. As to innate Dignity, We will let it paſs. But this I muſt inſiſt upon, and ſeveral Writers of the firſt Repute are on my Side—That We enter the Stage of Life, in a State of *Indifference* either to Good or Evil—That the Affections are like a Balance, nicely poiſed, and preponderating neither one Way nor the other.—The whole Soul, like a Sheet of fair Paper, is equally ſuſceptible of ſtrait or crooked Lines; and will as readily receive the amiable Features of an Angel, as the hideous Deformity of a Devil.

Aſp. With regard to your firſt Illuſtration.—The Simile, I think, confutes the Sentiment. For, to be *in Suſpenſe*, whether We ſhall love the LORD our GOD, the Giver of all Good, and the Source of all Perfection; this, ſurely, muſt be condemned as an irreligious Temper.—This is a criminal Halting between GOD and *Baal*.—A Neutrality, which is no better than Hoſtility.

I fear, the Writers You mention, pay but little Deference to the inſpired Volume. Our Eſcutcheon is very differently blazoned, in that Office of ſpiritual Heraldry. *A Tranſgreſſor from the Womb* †, is one of

* The original Words are נתעב ונאלח—One is uſed to ſignify that *abominable* Practice, which the *Egyptians* could not bear to view. *Exod.* viii. ver. 22. *Heb. Bib.* ver. 26. *Engl. Bib.*—The other denotes an Object, too *ſqualid* to be viewed without lothing.

† *Iſai.* xlviii. 8. A Truth ſo apparent and undeniable, that *Seneca* could not but diſcern it, though He was

of our hereditary Titles. Tranſgreſſors We are, by ſtrong internal Propenſity; even before We tranſgreſs, in outward Act.

Obſerve the young *Hawthorn* Plants, which have unfolded their green Leaves, in yonder Nurſery; but have ſcarce learned to ſpread the gay Bloſſom. Is there in thoſe Plants an equal Aptitude, to produce the luſcious juicy Grape, or their own coarſe and huſky Berry? By no means. They will (unleſs grafted with ſome generous Cyon) *certainly*, *univerſally*, *conſtantly* bear the ſame harſh Fruit, with their parent Tree.—So certainly will the human Mind, if not renewed by the SPIRIT of *CHRIST*, branch out into ungodly Tempers, and bring forth wicked Practices.

Ther. The Nobleman, mentioned by *Xenophon* *, when overcome by an alluring Temptation, deviſed for his Excuſe the Notion of two Souls; one, that inclined Him to Vice; another, that prompted Him to Virtue. This was a moderate *Caricatura* †, compared with my Friend's. He will allow nothing regular or graceful in the human Heart.—You have metamorphoſed the Maſter-piece of the Creation, into ſuch a deformed Object; as may juſtly render Him a Terror to Himſelf. Can there be a groſſer Libel upon the CREATOR, or a greater Diſcouragement to our Fellow-creatures?

Aſp.

an *uninlightened* Heathen: could not but acknowledge it, attached as He was to the *proud Stoic* Sect. *Hac Conditione* nati ſumus. *Animalia obnoxia non paucioribus Animi quam Corporis Morbis.* De Ira. Lib. II. c. 9.

* *Cyropæd.* Lib. VI.

† A Term uſed by the *Italian* Painters, to ſignify a Reſemblance horrid or ridiculous.

Aſp. If this be a deformed Piece, what will You call the following Deſcription? *GOD ſaw that the Wickedneſs of Man was great upon the Earth; and that every Imagination of the Thoughts of his Heart was only evil continually* *. This, perhaps, may be reckoned a more monſtrous Drawing ſtill. Yet it came from *that* Hand, which painted the Canopy of the Skies, and touched all the Pictures of Nature into ſuch inimitable Perfection.

Pray, let us examine the moſt diſtinguiſhing Features in this Draught.—Not barely the Works of his Hand, or the Words of his Tongue, but the *Imaginations of his Heart*, are evil. The Contagion has ſpread itſelf through the inner Man. It has tainted the Seat of his Principles, and the Source of his Actions †.—Is there not, You will ſay, ſome Mixture of Good? No; they are *only* Evil. There is no hopeful Tendency. Not ſo much as a little Leaven of Piety; that may have a Chance to diffuſe itſelf, and meliorate the whole Lump.—But are there no lucid Intervals? No happy Moments, when Virtue gains the Aſcendency? None: He is only

* Gen. vi. 5.

† The Original is very exact in its Structure, as well as very emphatical in its Meaning.—לב The *Heart*, or grand Principle—מחשבות The *Thoughts* of the Heart, or the various Actings of that Principle—יצר The *Imagination* of the Thoughts, or the Produce and Reſult of thoſe Actings; namely, Deſires and Affections, Counſels and Purpoſes. Of which, not one, a few only, or the greateſt Part, but *all* theſe are evil.—Somewhat like this, is St. *Paul's* Analyſis of the intellectual Oeconomy; νους, νοημα, λογισμοι. All which He repreſents, as in a State of Enmity againſt *CHRIST*. As Forts or Bulwarks, erected to maintain a Siege, againſt the Knowledge and Obedience of his Goſpel. 2 *Cor.* x. 5.

only evil *continually*. The Uſurpation of Sin is total, and its Tyranny perpetual.

What I have advanced, therefore, is no Libel upon the CREATOR's Benignity. Becauſe, it is the very Echo of his own Determination.—Neither is it ſo properly diſcouraging, as humbling and alarming to our Fellow-creatures.—*Humbling*, to make Us ſenſible of our Ruin: *Alarming*, to make Us deſirous of a Recovery.

Ther. Is not the Deſcription, which You have produced, peculiar to the Men of that wicked Generation? Whoſe Guilt was as unparalleled, as their Puniſhment?

Aſp. It is applicable both to them and their Succeſſors. The Wiſdom of GOD *repeats* the Charge, and fixes it upon the Race, which ſurvived the Flood *. The Depravity of human Nature continued, nor could the Waters of an univerſal Deluge purge it away. So deep alas! is the Stain, and ſo incorrigible the Virulency, of original Corruption; that it will yield to nothing—to nothing will it yield, but to the *Waſhing of Regeneration, and renewing of the HOLY GHOST* †. Till

* *Gen.* viii. 21. Where, I think, the Particle כי is uſed in the *adverſative*, not the *cauſal* Signification; and ſhould be rendered *though*, rather than *for*.—Where, it may be pleaſing, if not ſo directly pertinent, to obſerve; that the Forbearance of the righteous GOD, is aſcribed to the great Atonement; typefied by *Noah*'s Burnt-offerings, and ſpecified by St. *Paul* in his Epiſtle to the *Epheſians*; who probably alludes to this Paſſage. *The LORD* ſmelled a ſweet Savour, *and the LORD ſaid in his Heart, I will not again curſe the Earth any more for Man's Sake*, though *the Imagination of Man's Heart be evil from his Youth*. See *Eph.* v. 2.

† Tit. iii. 5.

Till this takes place, every Heart of Man muſt wear the Prophet's ſtigmatizing Motto, *Deceitful above all Things, and deſperately wicked.*

Ther. This Paſſage, I am informed, is not rightly tranſlated; eſpecially, in the *laſt* Expreſſion. The *Hebrew* Original does not bear ſo hard upon the human Character, as the *Engliſh* Verſion.

Aſp. You allow then, that the Heart is *deceitful.* And of this We have a glaring Proof, in the Conduct of *Hazael.* He thought it impoſſible, that He ſhould ever perpetrate ſuch horrid Barbarities, as the Prophet foreſaw. *Is thy Servant a Dog, that He ſhould do this great Thing* *? Yes, *Hazael*; however Thou mayeſt imagine Thyſelf gentle as a Lamb, thou art fierce as a Dog, and ſavage as a Tyger.—Which was moſt terribly demonſtrated by the Event †.

Suppoſe, we tranſlate the other Word ſomewhat more accurately. The little Alteration will be of leſs Service to your Cauſe. Inſtead of deſperately wicked, You may, if You pleaſe, read *deplorably diſordered* ‡. This is the exact Import of the Phraſe.—It is a Metaphor, derived from a very diſtempered Body. In which, the whole Head is ſick, and the whole Heart faint. *From the Crown of* whoſe *Head,* to

* 2 Kings viii. 13.

† This ſelf-ſame *Hazael,* murdered his royal Maſter, and uſurped the Throne of *Syria*; burnt the Cities of *Iſrael,* and ſlew their Inhabitants with the Sword; daſhed the Infants in Pieces, and ripped up the Women with Child. Thus cruelly did He haraſs the *Iſraelites,* till He cruſhed their Strength; broke their Spirits; ruined their Nation; or, as the ſacred Hiſtorian ſpeaks moſt emphatically, *He made them like the Duſt by Threſhing.* 2 Kings xiii. 7.

‡ Jer. xvii. 9. אנוש

to the Sole of whoſe *Feet*, there is nothing but conſuming Diſeaſe, and enfeebling Languors *.—The Rules of Civility, 'tis true, may ſet a ſpecious Varniſh on the Converſation. But until Grace, ſanctifying Grace adminiſters the Remedy, the moſt civilized Heart will be only like the pale emaciated Cheek, that is poorly enlivened with Paint.

Ther. What ſay the Writers of the New Teſtament? Is not *their* Way of thinking more liberal and benign?—If human Nature wore ſo *hideous* an Aſpect, under the legal Diſpenſation; ſince the Coming of our LORD, and the Publiſhing of his Goſpel, One may expect an improved and more pleaſing Face of Things.

Aſp. Human Nature in *every* Period of Time, and under every Diſpenſation of Religion, is ſtill the *ſame*. It was the SPIRIT of *CHRIST*, who indited the Old Teſtament, and He cannot vary from Himſelf, in the Declarations of the New.

I am very much inclined to believe, That all the *bodily* Diſeaſes, which our Divine PHYSICIAN healed, during his Abode on Earth, were ſo many emblematical Repreſentations of *ſpiritual* Diſorders. Which, like certain Family Diſtempers, may be ſaid to run in the Blood of all Mankind.—Will you give me leave, *Theron*, to explain myſelf? I don't like to engroſs the Diſcourſe. Yet I would willingly enlarge upon this Subject.

Ther. By all means. The Laws of Argument, ſeparate from the Indulgencies of Friendſhip, give you

* *Iſai.* i. 6. Agreeable to this Doctrine, and conſonant to this Metaphor, is the Confeſſion of our Liturgy, *There is no Health in Us.*

you a Warrant to urge, whatever may ſupport your Cauſe.—Beſides, I ſhall be glad to hear your Sentiments upon a Point ſo curious.

Aſp. The poor *Leper*, covered with noiſome Sores, is the very Picture of a *polluted Sinner*. Was the One, for his contagious Impurities, ſeparated from the Society of his Fellow-citizens? So ſhall the other, for his abominable Uncleanneſs, be baniſhed from the beatific Preſence: Unleſs He be cleanſed by the Blood, and juſtified by the Righteouſneſs of *JESUS*.

You pity the Condition of that unhappy Creature, who was born *blind*. His Eyes rolled, but rolled in vain, to find the dawning Ray. Such is the benighted State of the human Mind, till Almighty GOODNESS command the Scales of Ignorance to fall off, and pour heavenly Day through all the intellectual Faculties. Then, and not till then, we begin to know the Holineſs, the Juſtice, the adorable Excellencies of GOD.—We ſee the ſublime Purity of his Law, and the extreme Depravity of our own Hearts.—We are brought acquainted with the tranſcendent Glories of our REDEEMER's Perſon, and apprehend that moſt comfortable Myſtery of his Subſtitution in our Stead. We diſcern the ineffable Perfection of his Merits, and the divinely rich Freeneſs of his Grace*. Truths, incomparably more delightful to the Soul, than

* This, and the preceding Particulars, are Leſſons of the laſt Importance in the *Chriſtian* School. The Knowledge of them deſerves to be moſt ſolicitouſly ſought, both by attentive Contemplation, and by earneſt Prayer. For, to know them, is to be *truly wiſe*; to be influenced by them, is to be *ſubſtantially happy*.

[illegible] the delectable Scenes of Creation are to [illegible]

The Paralytic's *enervated* Limbs too truly repreſent the Impotence of our Nature. Was He unable to grind at a Mill; to run in a Race; or to turn Himſelf on His Bed? So unable are We, to fight the good Fight of Faith; to exerciſe the Graces of Chriſtianity; or even to turn Ourſelves unto GOD.—Do not *you*, my Friend, experience ſomething of this Inability? For *my* Part I muſt lay my Hand on my Breaſt, and daily, hourly confeſs, "*The Palſy* "*is Here.* Though not altogether dead in Sin "(bleſſed be *CHRIST JESUS*, and his quicken-"ing SPIRIT!) yet how languid is my Zeal, "how enfeebled my Induſtry, in the great Affair "of everlaſting Salvation!—I would fain believe, "and with a full Aſſurance of Faith, the Promiſes "of the unchangeable JEHOVAH. But how "often do I ſtagger through Unbelief!—I would "fain love, and with the warmeſt Gratitude, my "ever-merciful and moſt beneficent GOD. But "Oh! what Coldneſs benumbs my Affections!—"I wiſh to be humble in every Thought; hea-"venly in all my Deſires; and wholly reſigned to "the divine Will. But, alas! my Sufficiency for "theſe Things, is like the *flaccid* Sinew, or the "*withered* Arm."

It would be endleſs to particularize all the Maladies, which were Emblems of our Miſery, and the Triumphs of our LORD's Power. Let me only remark—That their Bodies were afflicted with a *ſingle* Diſorder; our Souls labour under a *Complication* of Evils.—They *felt* their Affliction, and were deſirous, importunately deſirous, of Relief. We are, till awakened

awakened from above, insensible of our cursed State, and our lost Condition. We add, alas! We add, to all our other Indispositions, a stupifying Lethargy, or an extravagant Delirium.

Ther. Such allegorical Expositions of Scripture are pretty enough. But, I presume, You yourself cannot reckon them *demonstrative*. For my own Part, I must appeal from the Surmises of Fancy, to the Verdict of Reason.

Asp. I cannot think, that the allegorical Sense, when *soberly* introduced, is unworthy our Regard, or without its Weight. However, I have no Design to preclude your Appeal.—Will the avowed, will the reiterated Decision of an Apostle, satisfy my Friend, and be admitted as the Verdict of Reason?—St. *Paul* has declared of Himself; *in me, that is, in my Flesh*, or unrenewed Nature, *dwelleth no Good* *; no good Temper, nor so much as any good Desire.—Elsewhere he affirms; That *the carnal Mind*, or unregenerate Soul, *is not subject to the Law of GOD*. Nay, is an Enemy, or rather *Enmity* itself † — against what?—Against Sin? That were a noble Antipathy. — Against the World? That were a laudable Disaffection. — No; but against GOD and his Law. Amazing Perverseness! To be Enmity against GOD; who is boundless Benignity, and consummate Goodness. Enmity against his Law; which is the Transcript of his amiable Perfections, and the faultless Model of all Virtue.

Ther. This, I suppose, is the Character of *Saul* the *Pharisee*, not of *Paul* the Apostle. Descriptive

* Rom. vii. 18. † Rom. viii. 7.

of his Condition, when He was "a Blaſphemer, "a Perſecutor, and injurious."

Aſp. It relates not to Himſelf alone, but is applicable to All, who continue in a State of Nature.—The bleſſed AUTHOR of our Being, ſpeaking of Mankind in general, ſays; That *He is even Fleſh* *: mere Fleſh, altogether Fleſh, his very Soul, and all its Powers, are wholly enſlaved to fleſhly Appetites.—The beneficent RESTORER of our Happineſs, pronounces the ſame Sentence, in the very ſame Words: *That which is born of the Fleſh, is Fleſh* †: The Faculties, which Men receive by their natural Birth, have a vitiated Taſte, and a carnal Biaſs. They reliſh not the refined, the heavenly, the godlike. They incline only to ſelfiſh Aims, and groveling Purſuits.—Our SAVIOUR reinculcates the Admonition, and illuſtrates it by a very remarkable Alluſion. You cannot forget his Anſwer to a procraſtinating Diſciple; *Let the Dead bury their Dead* ‡: Intimating, that as many as are unſanctified by the HOLY GHOST, though poſſeſſed of an animal, are deſtitute of the divine

* *Gen.* vi. 3. The Word *Fleſh*, by which the All-wiſe CREATOR characterizes Man, ſignifies, in the ſacred Writings, whatever is *diſhonourable* in itſelf; *provoking* to GOD; or introductory to the *Ruin* of Man.—The *Works of the Fleſh*, are a Compendium of all Iniquity. *Gal.* v. 19, 20, 21.—To *walk after the Fleſh*, is the very Reverſe of walking in the SPIRIT; diametrically oppoſite to the divine Law and true Holineſs, *Rom.* viii. 4.—To be *carnally minded*, or to have the Influence, the Savour, the Reliſh of the Fleſh (φρονημα σαρκος) predominant in our Minds, is the ſpiritual Death of the Soul; and a Preſage of eternal Death, both in Body and Soul. *Rom.* viii. 6.

† John iii. 6. ‡ Matt. viii. 22.

divine Life. Are no more able to perform any ſpiritual and holy Duty, than a pale Corpſe in the Coffin, or dry Bones in the Charnel-houſe, are qualified to tranſact any ſecular Buſineſs.

St. *Paul* ſets the Seal of Heaven to this momentous Truth, in various Paſſages of his Epiſtles. From a Multitude let me ſelect one, and recommend it to your ſerious Conſideration. *You, that were ſometime alienated and Enemies:* the *Coloſſians*, and all Mankind were alienated from the living GOD; had no true Knowledge of Him; and, what is worſe, had no ſincere Deſire after Him. Nay; they were not only Strangers, but Enemies; in a State of Hoſtility to his holy Nature and heavenly Will.—What can expreſs a greater Degeneracy? Nothing, unleſs it be the following Clauſe: *by a Mind intent upon wicked Works* *. A Mind, not only averſe from all Good, but paſſionately prone to all Evil.

Ther. A few picked Paſſages, of a figurative Import, and artfully cogged by ſome dextrous Interpretation, may ſeem to ſupport your Cauſe.

Aſp. Ah! *Theron*, there is no need to uſe Sleight of Hand. He that runs, may read this Doctrine in the ſacred Authors. It is interwoven with the whole Series of their *hiſtorical*, and makes a profeſſed Part of their *practical* Writings.

* *Coloſſ.* i. 21. Τῃ διανοια εν τοις εργοις τοις πονηροις, *Mente malis Operibus intenta.* A very diſcerning Critic would thus point, and thus tranſlate the Words. For which Alteration, He aſſigns the following Reaſon; *Meus enim dicitur* eſſe in *ea Re, quam ſemper cogitat, ad quam Cupidine fertur & inclinatur.* DAVENANT in loc.—Let the Words be pointed and tranſlated, either in *this* or the *received* Manner, they ſpeak the Language, and confirm the Sentiments, of this whole Dialogue.

What is more common with the inſpired Penmen, than to expreſs a profligate Courſe of Life, *by following our own Imaginations, and walking in our own Ways?* When Immorality and Licentiouſneſs were predominant in *Iſrael*; knew no Reſtraints, and kept no Bounds; how does the unerring Hiſtorian deſcribe this horrible State of Things? *Every One did that which was right in his own Eyes* *. Nothing can more ſtrongly imply the extreme Depravity of Mankind, than ſuch a Phraſeology. Which makes it one and the ſame Thing, to purſue our *natural* Inclinations, and to act the abandoned Sinner.

St. *Jude* cannot write a few Lines, but He muſt touch upon this Subject; muſt teach this humbling Leſſon. *Senſual* †, He ſays, *not having the SPIRIT.* According to *his* Eſtimate, not to be actuated by the Power of Grace, is to remain under the Dominion of Senſuality. If We may credit this Ambaſſador of *CHRIST*, *every* Man, while unrenewed by the Divine SPIRIT, is governed by Fleſh and Senſe. Can *any* Man then pretend to be originally free from the ignoble Influence of Corruption?

St. *Paul* exempts not Himſelf, no, nor any of the higheſt Saints, from the opprobrious Charge: *We all walked according to the Deſires of the Fleſh and of the Mind.* Which Deſires in *Us*, as well as in the idolatrous *Heathens*, were baſe, ſordid, and contaminating.

* Judg. xvii. 6.—*See alſo* Pſal. lxxxi. 12. Eccl. xi. 9. Acts xiv. 16.

† *Jude* 19. The original Expreſſion is not Σαρκικος, but Ψυχικοι. Which denotes, what ſome People reckon the Glory of our Nature, the *rational* Soul. Yet thoſe Perſons, who have no higher a Principle, are, with all their Accompliſhments and Improvements, the very Reverſe of πνευματικοι, *ſpiritual.*

taminating. Insomuch that We, who are *Jews* by Birth; who are Sons of GOD, by our new Birth; even We were, *by Nature, the Children of Wrath* *; Creatures, in whom GOD could take no Pleasure, and against whom his Wrath was revealed from Heaven. If so, then, doubtless, subject to Depravity, and chargeable with Sin.

Ther. What says St. *James?* You have suppressed, and I had almost forgot, his Testimony; though it is so very pertinent to my Purpose, and so very explicit in my Favour. *Men, who are made after the Similitude of GOD.*—The Similitude of GOD signifies, in the sacred Books, those moral Endowments, which distinguish the Possessor both from the Brute and the Devil. And if Men are made after this Image; if they are created with these Endowments; *where* is your Doctrine of original Sin?

Asp. I began to flatter myself, that your Objections were exhausted. But, since I am mistaken in this Particular, surely it must be as great a Mistake to imagine, that our Apostle would maintain an Opinion, so repugnant to the aforementioned Texts, and so contrary to universal Observation.—Do not You perceive the very Reverse true, with regard to your own *Children?* Why do You address them with such tender Entreaties; with such warm Exhortations; such repeated Arguments? Why do You allure them to Duty by Promises, and deter them from Transgression by Threatenings? Is all this Regimen, all this Discipline, necessary for Creatures, that bear the holy Image of GOD?

* *Eph.* ii. 3. *Hoc uno Loco*, says BEZA, *quasi Fulmine, totus Homo, quantus quantus est, prosternitur. Neque enim Naturam dicit* læsam, *sed* mortuam, *per Peccatum; ideoque* Iræ *obnoxiam.*

They *made after the Similitude of GOD!*—Then they have no need of the *renewing* Influences of the HOLY GHOST, in caſe they live; and no need of the *Atonement* of *CHRIST*'s Blood, in caſe they die. Would *James*, the LORD's Brother, aſſert ſuch an egregious Error; as not only oppoſes a ſingle Article, but undermines the *whole* Conſtitution of Chriſtianity? Sets aſide the Sanctification of the Divin SPIRIT, and the Propitiation of the REDEEMER's Death?—Impoſſible for Him to aſſert! Impoſſible, I ſhould think, for Us to ſuppoſe!

St. *James* ſpeaks of a Fact that is *paſt*: ſpeaks of Men *collectively*, as they were all included in their firſt Parent. The Paſſage, I apprehend, ſhould be tranſlated, not, Men that *are*; but, Men that *were* * created; whoſe human Nature was formed:—The Scripture conſiders *Adam*, as the common Parent of Us all: nay more, conſiders Us all as exiſting in our great Progenitor. Which is ſo far from overthrowing, that it eſtabliſhes, the Point in Debate. For, if We were all created after the Similitude of GOD, in and with *Adam*; it muſt follow, that We all fell from our Conformity to GOD, in and with *Adam*. If ſo—let me for once retort my Friend's

* *Jam.* iii. 9. That this is the preciſe Signification of the Participle γεγονότας, may be gathered from 1 *Tim.* v. 9. Where γεγονυια is tranſlated *having been*; and muſt neceſſarily refer, not to the *preſent*, but to the *paſt* Condition of the Widow.—We have a ſimilar Manner of Expreſſion and Repreſentation, 1 *Cor.* xi. 8. Which Paſſage moſt evidently deſcribes, not the ſucceſſive Production, but the *firſt Creation* of the human Species.—All this exactly accords with the divine Declaration, *In the Image of GOD made He Man.* עשה not עושה; εποιησεν ſays the Septuagint, not ποιει; *did make*, not *does make*.

Friend's Interrogatory—Where, or in whom, is *not* original Sin?

I am very ſure, this Doctrine runs through our *Liturgy*; is an eſſential Part of our *Articles*; and moſt ſtrongly delineated in our *Homilies*. Shall I produce ſome of thoſe Teſtimonies; which are as clear, as they are copious?

Ther. No more of your Teſtimonies, good *Aſpaſio*. Inform me rather, what *Advantage* can accrue from your inculcating, or my adopting ſuch a Doctrine. Suppoſe, it were undeniably true; diſagreeable Truths, like diſagreeable Objects, ſhould be conſigned over to Obſcurity, not obtruded upon our View.—On ſuch an Occaſion, the Reply of *Themiſtocles* ſhould be mine. One of the *Literati* of *Greece*, offered to communicate an elaborate and curious Invention. By means of which, his Memory ſhould be ſo wonderfully ſtrengthened, as to retain whatever He read or heard. "My Friend, replied the "Hero, You quite miſtake the Way to ſerve me. "I want to learn the Art, not of *remembering*, but "of *forgetting*."

Aſp. If to forget our Diſeaſe, were a likely Method to *reſtore* our Health, I ſhould readily concur in your Hero's Way of Thinking. As this will hardly be allowed, I cannot but judge it more adviſeable, to give ſome Attention to our Diſeaſe, that We may enquire after a Remedy.

Ther. Where is this Remedy to be had?

Aſp. Not on Earth, but from Heaven.—The Schools of Science cannot diſcover it. The Courts of Kings are unable to procure it. The College of Phyſicians know not how to preſcribe it. But the

Goſpel of our Salvation preſcribes, prepares, and diſpenſes it. The Language of *CHRIST* in his holy Word is, *I will bring her Health and Cure* *. And the Beginning of our Cure is, to be ſenſible of our Diſorder.

Hence We are taught to be *humble*.—To review the Catalogue of our actual Tranſgreſſions, is a mortifying Employ. But that which lays the Soul in the loweſt Abaſement, is the Conviction of *inbred* Iniquity. This ſtrikes at the Root of human Vanity, and cuts aſunder the very Sinews of Self-conceit. A total Loſs of Righteouſneſs and true Holineſs; an utter Impotency to all Good, and an impetuous Propenſity to all Evil; theſe are not *Viſitants*, but † *Inhabitants*; congenial with our Frame, and ingrained in our Conſtitution. How then—O! how can *We* be vain of our moral Beauty, who have ſuch an hereditary Defilement and Deformity cleaving to all our Faculties? Surely, this muſt baniſh the *Phariſee* from our Breaſt, and inſpire Us with the Sentiments of that ſincere Penitent, *Behold! I am vile* ‡! Muſt teach Us the Language of the abaſhed Leper, *Unclean! Unclean* ‖!

Ther. I ſhould think, it would make Us *melancholy*, rather than humble. Serve no other Purpoſe, than to introduce an afflictive Senſe of extreme Wretchedneſs.

Aſp.

* Jer. xxxiii. 6.

† Accordingly, this Corruption is ſtyled, not barely ἡ παρακειμένη, that which is *at our Elbow*. Rom. vii. 21. ἡ ευπερίστατος, that which *eaſily ſurrounds* Us. *Heb.* xii. 1. but ἡ οικέσα, that which *dwelleth in* Us. *Rom.* vii. and ἡ φυλάσσουσα, that which, like a ſtrong Man armed, *keepeth Garriſon* in our Souls. *Luke* xi. 21.

‡ Job xl. 4. ‖ Lev. xiii. 45.

Aſp. Did We intend to reſt Here, your Apprehenſions would be juſt. But We urge the Doctrine of original Corruption, as a *Preparative* for the Redemption of *CHRIST*.

It is obſervable, that very Few applied to the bleſſed *JESUS* in the Days of his Fleſh, but the Sons and Daughters of Affliction. The Levee of that PRINCE of Peace, was crouded by the Lame, the Blind, the Diſeaſed. Theſe, being ſenſible of Diſtreſs, and longing for Relief, fell as humble Supplicants at his Feet. While Others, who were firm in their Health, and gay in their Spirits, rejected Him with contemptuous Scorn.—When We perceive "the Plague of our Heart," and feel thoſe worſe than ulcerous Sores, which overſpread our Nature; We alſo ſhall ardently ſeek to *the LORD our Healer*. When we find Ourſelves ſubject to the Curſe of the Law, in Bondage to the Tyranny of Satan, and liable to everlaſting Damnation; *then* the Divine PHYSICIAN, and the Divine REDEEMER will be precious indeed.—Whereas, if We remain inſenſible of our Miſery, the Goſpel, which is *ſaving Health* to the contrite Soul, will be an unaffecting Story to our Ears. We may hear it, We may read it, as an amuſing Narrative; but ſhall not *receive* it, as a ſovereign Remedy.

Ther. Not receive the Goſpel, *Aſpaſio!* I hardly underſtand what You mean. I often ſtudy the Goſpel; I believe it to be a divine Revelation; and endeavour to follow its Directions.—I look upon it, as containing the moſt refined Syſtem of Morality; as enforcing every Virtue, by the ſtrongeſt Motives; and recommending all, by the moſt perfect Example.

Aſp.

Asp. To which You ſhould add — as revealing that great MEDIATOR, who has fulfilled all Righteouſneſs, to effect our Juſtification; who has alſo the Fulneſs of the SPIRIT, to accompliſh our Regeneration. Otherwiſe, what You mention, is infinitely ſhort of the *Goſpel*.—It brings no glad Tidings to fallen Creatures. It adminiſters no Succours to ruined Sinners. It is like writing a correct Copy for the Blind; or ſetting a laborious Taſk to the Diſabled. Which would rather be an Inſult on their Impotence, than a Relief of their Diſtreſs.

The firſt Particular I wave at preſent. Only let me aſk your Opinion of the laſt; which is a grand Doctrine, and a very diſtinguiſhing Privilege of the Goſpel. I mean the Doctrine and the Privilege of *ſpiritual Regeneration*. Excluſive of which, all your Endeavours to poſſeſs Virtue and practiſe Morality, will be no better than Endeavours, to fly without Wings, or to run without Feet.

While unimpreſſed with a Senſe of our original Depravity, We ſhall probably ſit down contented with ſome *ſuperficial* Reformation, and not aſpire after a Renewal of the Heart. *Civility* will paſs for Sanctity, and a *temperate* Diſpoſition for a gracious Habit.—Why is the New Birth, why are all the ſaving Operations of the bleſſed SPIRIT, diſregarded by ſome, derided by Others? Becauſe, theſe Perſons are inſenſible of their utter Inability to all Good, and of their abject Slavery to all Evil. Therefore, they ſee no Reaſon for *this* divine Agency, or for *that* univerſal Change.

You alſo, my dear Friend, while unacquainted with your natural Corruption, cannot apprehend either the Reaſonableneſs or the Neceſſity, of being

renewed

renewed in the Spirit of your Mind *. But when Experience has taught You the former, You will want no Arguments to convince You of the latter.—Can Creatures, who are *blind* in their Underſtandings, diſcern the Things which belong to their eternal Peace?—Can Creatures, who are *dead* in Sin, exerciſe the Graces, or diſcharge the Duties, of a Chriſtian Life?—Can Creatures, whoſe Hearts are at *Enmity* againſt GOD, either delight to do his Will Here, or be meet for his beatific Preſence Hereafter?

Under the Influence of ſuch Convictions, that New Birth, which the Goſpel of *CHRIST* promiſes, which the SPIRIT of GOD produces, will appear as neceſſary for your State, and be as welcome to your Soul, as theſe gentle *Dews* are neceſſary for the languiſhing Herbs, and welcome to the thirſty Soil.

Ther. The Dews, though refreſhing to the Flowers, may be too chilly for our Conſtitutions. And ſee! The Star of Evening, by proclaiming the Approach of Night, has given Us a Warning to quit our Arbour.—Some other Time We muſt reſume this Enquiry. For I am by no means ſatisfied, that your Theory agrees with Experience.

Aſp. I fear, I have already kept You out too long. Let me juſt obſerve, as We go in—That the Doctrine, however diſagreeable in itſelf, is conducted to an *advantageous* Iſſue. It is productive of a much more ſubſtantial Conſolation, than Hiſtory aſſigns to the great, but exiled *Marius*. When he fled, with his ruined Circumſtances, to linger out the poor Remains of Life among the Ruins of *Carthage*,

* Eph. iv. 23.

thage, what was his chief Support? "Contemplating, ſays my Author, that famous City in "the Duſt, He was the leſs afflicted with his own "Downfal *."

We have not been put off with ſuch cold Comforts, ſuch *negative* Benefits. The Belief of original Sin has a Tendency—To make Us *humble*—To ſhew Us our *Need* of *CHRIST*—To create in Us a Hunger and Thirſt after the *renewing* Influences of his SPIRIT, and the juſtifying Merit of his Righteouſneſs.—So that it muſt be owing to our own Perverſeneſs, or our own Negligence, if We do not levy a *Tax* upon our *Loſs*, and *riſe* even by our *Fall*.

* *Inopem Vitam in Tugurio Ruinarum Carthaginenſium toleravit: cum Marius aſpiciens Carthaginem, illa intuens Marium, alter alteri poſſent eſſe Solatio.*

VELL. PATERC.

DIALOGUE XII.

THE Sun was fiercely bright, and the Sky without a Cloud.—Not a Breath fanned the Woods; not a Gale curled the Stream.—The Fields, expoſed to all the fiery Beams, were like a glowing Hearth.—The little Birds, overcome by the potent Influence, loſt for a while their tuneful Notes. Nothing was heard in the Garden, but the drowſy Hum of Bees, and the Moan-like Buz of winged Inſects.—All Nature ſeemed to *languiſh*. The flouriſhing Meads looked ſickly; the gayeſt Bloſſoms began to fade; the ſprightlieſt Animals, if not repoſed under ſome cooling Shelter, panted for Breath, and hung their drooping Heads, amidſt the all-ſurrounding Blaze and the unſufferable Heat.

Aſpaſio diſappeared ſince Dinner. None could tell, whither He was gone.—*Theron*, as ſoon as the Tea-Equipage was removed, took his Way to the *Wood*. Longing for the thickeſt Shade, He haſtened to the Center. The Avenue conſiſted of a ſerpentine Walk. Which, after having preſented You with ſeveral Species of Plants, and ſeveral Degrees

Degrees of Verdure, ends in a large circular Area: not covered with a *Grecian* or *Roman* Temple, unmeaning Imitation of Pagan Idolatry: but ſurrounded with aged and princely Oaks. The Coalition of whoſe Branches, threw over the graſſy Plat a majeſtic rural Dome; and their unpierced Foliage, *imbrowned the Noon-tide Hours.*

In the Midſt, and elevated on a ſquare Baſe, was a Statue repreſenting the venerable *Elijah*—in a Poſture of Worſhip—with his Hands ſtretched out, and Eyes lifted up to Heaven. His Attitude, his Air, his every Feature, were a moſt lively Comment on thoſe ſtrong energetic Expreſſions of Scripture; *take hold on GOD* *; *wreſtle with the ALMIGHTY* †; *pour out your Hearts before HIM* ‡.—On one Side of the Pedeſtal, were engraven the Prieſts of *Baal*; in frantic Emotions calling upon their ſenſeleſs Deity, and gaſhing themſelves with unavailing Wounds.—On the other was exhibited, in Baſſo-relievo, the adoring *Tiſhbite*'s Altar; his Victim burning with Fire from the LORD, even while the Water ran from every Limb, and overflowed the Trench below.

A remote Caſcade tumbled from a craggy Rock. The very Stream, like its Maſter, ſeemed in haſte to eſcape from the intenſe and raging Heat. With Hurry and Impetuoſity, it ruſhed into this grand Arbour. But here, impreſſed, as it were, with the unexpected *Solemnity* of the Scene, it ſuddenly checked the tumultuous Wave. And, having juſt ſaluted, or kiſſed the ſkirts of this revered Spot, turned aſide into a more ſequeſtred Path. As ſome *heedleſs* Trifler,

* Iſai. lxiv. 7.

† *Coloſſ.* iv. 12. Αγωνιζομενος εν ταις προσευχαις.

‡ Pſal. lxii. 8.

Trifler, who bolts unawares into the royal Preſence, ſtands ſtruck with Reverence and Awe, or retires with Precipitance and Confuſion.

The deep Gloom, ſhedding a Kind of Night, even while the Sun glared in the Sky—Not a Whiſper ſtirring, among ſo many Millions of Leaves; and all their warbling Natives huſhed in Silence. The ſonorous *Toll* of the diſtant *Caſcade*, and the tinkling *Chime* of the nearer Rill—The profound Adoration, and fervent Devotion, which lived in the Lineaments of the impaſſioned Stone—All theſe Circumſtances rendered the Place peculiarly penſive and auguſt. Not much unlike the antient *Oratories* *; where holy People withdrew from the giddy Ring,

* It is thought by ſome eminent Critics, that, when our LORD continued all Night ἐν προσευχῇ Θεοῦ, Luke vi. 12. the Phraſe denotes his Continuance in *an Oratory*; a Place ſet apart for Prayer, Meditation, and a devout Intercourſe with GOD.

That there were Places of this Kind among the *Jews*, is indiſputable; and that the Opinion is ingenious, cannot be denied. But I very much doubt, whether it gives Us the true Meaning of the Evangeliſt.—Having mentioned *a Mountain*, it would hardly ſuit his conciſe Manner, to be more particular with regard to the Place: neither was the Circumſtance ſo important, as to deſerve a ſecond Mention.—I am apt to think alſo, that *ſuch a Place* would have defeated the Deſign of our SAVIOUR's Retirement, which ſeems to have been Privacy; and that *ſuch* a *Title*, as GOD's Place of Prayer, was wholly appropriated to the Temple.

I apprehend, We ſhall have a more *defenſible*, I am perſuaded, We ſhall have a more *exalted* Senſe, if We ſuppoſe the Clauſe to ſignify—the Copiouſneſs and Fervour of our LORD's Devotion—the vaſt Importance, and the unequaled Succeſs, of this his prolonged Prayer. All which is expreſſed, according to the *Hebrew* Idiom, by the Addition of the divine Name. And, ſo expreſſed,

Ring, and the buſtling Croud, to ennoble their Minds, with ſublime Contemplation. Where, they bid a temporary Adieu to the tumultuous World, its gay Impertinence; in order to maintain a more uninterrupted Communion with that Mighty BEING, who *ſitteth upon the Circle of the Earth, and the Inhabitants thereof are as Graſhoppers* before HIM *.

Welcome to *Theron*, was the ſhady Bower; welcome the cool Aſpect, and the muſical Flow of the Water; but more welcome than all, was the Sight of his Friend. Who lay reclined at the Foot of an Oak; with a Book half open in his Hand, and his Eye fixed upon the Statue.

Ther. I know not, *Aſpaſio*, whether I muſt make an Apology, for breaking in upon your Retirement; or call You to an Account, for depriving the Ladies of your Company at the Tea-table.

Aſp. Indeed, *Theron*, I have been ſo much delighted with the Place; with the alluring Companion in my Hand; and the commanding Object before me;

is much more emphatical, than any *ſuperlative* Degree, uſed by the *Greeks* or *Romans*. *He continued all Night in* the Prayer of GOD.

* *Iſai.* xl. 22. What a noble *Image* is here, and what an exquiſitely fine *Contraſt!* GOD, the great GOD, ſitteth on thoſe lofty and immenſe Heavens, which, at an inconceivable Diſtance, ſurround this penſile Globe. From that moſt ſublime and magnificent Throne, he looks down upon the Inhabitants of the Earth. Who—in all their Pomp and Splendor—amidſt all their admired Works, and boaſted Acquiſitions—are *mean* and *impotent* in his Sight. Mean and impotent as the poor Inſects, which wander over the parched Heath for Suſtenance: which ſpend all the Day in idle inſignificant Chirpings: and, at Night, take up their contemptible Habitation on a Blade of Graſs.

me; that I ſcarce obſerved, how the Time ſtole away. I flatter myſelf, if You will take a Seat by my Side, and ſhare my Entertainment; You will be more inclined to excuſe, than to aggravate my Fault.

Ther. Is *Tully* then (for I obſerve his Name on the Volume) your alluring Companion? And can ſuch a devoted Admirer of the *Bible*, be ſo highly charmed with a *Heathen Claſſic?* — St. *Auguſtine* ſomewhere declares, that, though paſſionately fond, before his Converſion, of *Tully*'s Writings; yet, after that memorable Change, He could no longer reliſh thoſe once admired Compoſitions; becauſe they were not ſweetened, as He expreſſes Himſelf, with the *melliſluous* Name of *JESUS*.

Aſp. I am far from pretending to ſuch an exalted Pitch of Devotion, as that ſeraphic Father attained. I can ſpend a vacant Minute on the delicate Odes of *Horace*; I can taſte a refined Entertainment in *Virgil*'s beautiful Poem; and not be chagrined, though I find no Mention of my SAVIOUR.— But when I hear a *Sermon*, or peruſe a *religious* Treatiſe, which borrows neither Dignity nor Charms from that amiable and glorious Name, I own myſelf extremely diſappointed. Without the Offices, the Merits, or the Grace of *CHRIST*, the Sermon and the Treatiſe appear as *defective*, as a Body that is neither adorned with the Head, nor enlivened with the Heart.

Ther. I ſuppoſe then You cultivate an Acquaintance with the *Grecian* and *Roman* Authors, in order to improve your Taſte, and poliſh your Style.

Aſp. Theſe, and, I am apt to think, more conſiderable Advantages, may be derived from a proper

Application to their Works. They may ſerve as ſo many Shades, to ſet off, with *heightened* Luſtre, the Beauty and Glory of the ſacred Oracles.

While I peruſe *Plato*'s ornamented Page, or liſten to *Cicero*'s flowing Periods, I am ſomewhat like the Perſon, who amuſes Himſelf in a Gallery of *painted* Flowers. He is pleaſed with the curious Creation of the Pencil. But, finds none of that *delicious* Fragrance, none of thoſe *breathing* Sweets, which meet Him in the Garden, and regale his Senſe from the blooming Parterre.—So, here are brilliant Sentiments, and a florid Diction; delicate Touches of Wit, and bold Strokes of Deſcription. But, no Diſcoveries of *CHRIST JESUS*—no Diſplays of his ineffable Love—no Overtures of Reconciliation with the bleſſed GOD. Nothing to yield Us *ſolid* Comfort, in our preſent State; or any *joyful* Expectations, with regard to the approaching Eternity.

Beſides; when I converſe with thoſe celebrated Geniuſes of Antiquity, who were at once the moſt erroneous, and the moſt judicious—the *moſt judicious*, in their Taſte of polite Literature; the *moſt erroneous*, in their Apprehenſions of inviſible Things; they ſhew me, what they never intended, the inexpreſſible Need of *Revelation*. They teach me to ſet a higher Value on that ineſtimable Gift. I bleſs the diſtinguiſhing Goodneſs of Providence, which has caſt my Lot *, not at *Athens*, but in IMMANUEL's Land.

* Alluding to the Story of the Philoſopher, who uſed to bleſs the Gods for three Privileges.—That He was made, not a *Brute*, but a *rational* Creature.—That He was born, not in *barbarous* Climes, but in *Greece*.—That He lived, not in the more *uncultivated* Ages, but in the Time and under the Tuition of *Socrates*.

Land. I ſay, with Wonder and Gratitude—"Why "did not *my* Exiſtence commence, in thoſe Æras "of religious Dotage? Why did not my Heritage "lie in thoſe Regions of Barbariſm and Deluſion? "Why am not I burning Incenſe to Idols; pay-"ing ſenſeleſs Adoration to ſculptured Stone; or "worſhipping, with deteſtable Ceremonies, a Set "of laſcivious, debauched, and ſcandalous * Dei-"ties?"—Surely, *Theron*, from every Peruſal of thoſe Volumes, attended with ſuch a Reflection, We ſhall ſee the utmoſt Reaſon to magnify the *tender Mercies of our* GOD; *whereby the Day-ſpring from on high hath viſited Us* †, and brought Us out of Darkneſs into the marvelous Light of the Goſpel.

Permit me to mention another Benefit, which may reſult from an occaſional Correſpondence with thoſe maſterly Writers.—The Streams may lead Us to the inexhauſtible Fountain. Lead Us to admire the *only wiſe* GOD our SAVIOUR, who has given ſuch a ſhining Vein of Ingenuity to his rational Creatures. As I read their Works, and am

* This, I think, gives Us the moſt deplorable and horrid Idea of the *Blindneſs* of our fallen Nature. The Heathens, even amidſt all the Politeneſs of their Taſte, and notwithſtanding their ſuperior Advancement in the fine Arts, were Haters of the true GOD, and robbed Him of his Honour: nay, what is unſpeakably worſe, they paid it to *Monſters*—Monſters of Lewdneſs and Treachery, and Vice and Immorality. Egregious, ſottiſh, almoſt incredible Stupidity! To *worſhip* thoſe Beings, which deſerved univerſal *Abhorrence!* To *deify* thoſe Characters, which could never be ſufficiently *deteſted!*

And Devils to adore for Deities!

† Luke i. 78.

charmed with their Beauties, I would frequently reflect—" If the Eſſays of a finite Mind, and the " Compoſitions of a mortal Pen, yield ſuch *high* " *Satisfaction*; what rapturous, what unknown De- " light muſt ariſe, from an uninterrupted Com- " munion with infinite Wiſdom? To ſtand—not " at the Feet of *Homer*, and attend the Flights of " his elevated Imagination—not in the Preſence of " *Solomon*, and hear the Dictates of his ſagacious " Soul * — but, to ſtand in the Courts of the " LORD, and before the Throne of the LAMB. " There to contemplate, without any interpoſing " Veil, the Counſels of his unerring Providence; " to have the Myſteries of his redeeming Love, " laid fully open to our View; and receive the " brighteſt Manifeſtations of all his amiable, his " adorable, his unſpeakble Attributes!"

Ther. Theſe are Advantages, truly deſirable, and equally obvious. Methinks, it *ſurpriſes* me, that I ſhould never ſo much as propoſe them; and *grieves* me, that I ſhould ſo long be deprived of them. A View to ſuch very ſuperior Improvements will, I hope, render my future Intercourſe with thoſe favourite Authors, ſtill more agreeable, and abundantly more beneficial.

But let me aſk, what Paſſage was engaging your Attention, this Afternoon?

Aſp. The great Orator's Treatiſe, concerning the *Nature of the Divine* BEING †. That Part eſpecially, which proves his Exiſtence and Perfections, from the Formation of the *human Body*.

Ther.

* *Happy*, ſays the Queen of *Sheba* to *Solomon*, *are thy Men, and happy are theſe thy Servants, which ſtand continually before Thee, and hear thy Wiſdom.* 2 Chron. ix. 7.

† *De Natura Deorum.*

Ther. Don't You perceive, that the Orator is almoſt as deficient, in the Knowledge of his Subject; as he is miſtaken, in his Ideas of the Supreme CAUSE?—The exquiſite Contrivance and inimitable Workmanſhip of the human Frame, were, in thoſe early Ages, but dimly diſcerned. It was the *Infancy* of Anatomy: when the very Profeſſors had ſcarcely the Qualifications of a modern Pupil. Many of the received Notions, were childiſh; almoſt all of them, ſuperficial.

Aſp. Will my *Theron* then entertain me with a more accurate Deſcription of this wonderful Structure?

Ther. How could You take occaſion, *Aſpaſio*, from the Hint I dropped, to conceive any ſuch Expectation? It is one Thing to *diſcover*, another to *correct*, what is amiſs. Many Spectators can point out an accidental Defect in ſome celebrated Statue, or a ſmall Indelicacy in ſome valuable Piece of Painting; who are abſolutely incapable of retouching the One, or ſupplying the Other. Remember the Cobler and *Apelles* *.

Aſp.

* As ſome Perſons will be at loſs to underſtand the Meaning of this Hint, a Word or two by Way of Explanation, may, to them at leaſt, not be impertinent.

Apelles was the moſt maſterly Painter in *Greece*, perhaps, in the World. After He had finiſhed any noble Work, He uſed to expoſe it, in ſome Place of Concourſe, for general Examination: Himſelf ſtanding behind a Curtain, and liſtening to the Remarks, which the Spectators made. When one of his fineſt Pieces was, in this Manner, exhibited to public View, Multitudes flocked to the curious Spectacle. Among others, came a *Cobler*. Who, taking particular Notice of the Foot, cried out; "Here "*Apelles* has blundered. The Strop is too big for the

Aſp. I remember the Story, but without relinquiſhing my Requeſt. No; ſince We are fallen upon this Point, I cannot, I had almoſt ſaid, I will not diſmiſs it, till I am favoured with your Explanations and Remarks.—Eſpecially, as You have made this Branch of Science, a Part of your Amuſement; and not without the Advantage of *anatomical* Diſſections. Whereas, I have very ſeldom applied my Thoughts to the former, and never had an Opportunity of being preſent at the latter.

Let me alſo obſerve, that our very Situation favours, or rather ſuggeſts ſuch a Topic of Converſation. This deep embowering Shade has drawn a Curtain between Us and the World. All the fine Proſpects of the Country are excluded. We have ſcarce any Thing left, but *Ourſelves*, to contemplate. And ſhall this be the only Theme We neglect?

Ther. It is ſomewhat prepoſterous, I muſt confeſs, to pry into the Receſſes of Libraries; to ranſack the Cabinets of the *Virtuoſi*; and carry our Search through the whole Compaſs of external Nature. Yet

"Shoe."—Truly, Friend, Thou art right; replied the Artiſt. There is a Diſproportion; and it ſhall be corrected.—The poor Mechanic, tranſported with the Honour paid to his Judgment, muſt needs deliver his Opinion upon other Parts of the Picture.—Hold, ſays *Apelles*, with a ſcornful Sneer; *Ne Sutor ultra Crepidam.* That is; "Cobler, keep to thy Laſt. Here, Thou art a Critic; "elſewhere, an Ideot."

The Sarcaſm paſſed into a *Proverb*; and is very juſtly applied, When human Reaſon would brow-beat divine Revelation—When the moral Senſe would ſupplant the Grace of *CHRIST*—When the Righteouſneſs of Works would, in the important Article of Juſtification, ſhare with or ſet aſide *the Righteouſneſs which is by Faith.*

Yet overlook the far more ſurpriſing Curioſities, which abound in the Compoſition of our own Bodies. The Rarities, the Myſteries, the Miracles, inlaid or locked up in theſe Cabinets of Fleſh and Blood.

Since you inſiſt upon it, my Obſervations, crude and extemporaneous as they are, ſhall ſubmit themſelves to your Judgment. Provided, You will be content to receive, only a few of the *Outlines*, and nothing like a *finiſhed* Draught.

Aſp. Let me juſt hint, that the more *circumſtantial* your Account is, ſo much the more welcome will it be to your Friend, and ſo much the more honourable to our common CREATOR. Let me alſo remind You of *Galen*'s Declaration: which, as it is judicious and important, will, I hope, induce You to enlarge your Plan, and give full Scope to your Imagination.—"Thoſe Treatiſes, which diſ-"play the tranſcendent Excellencies of the great "CREATOR, compoſe one of the nobleſt and "moſt *acceptable* Hymns. To acquaint Ourſelves "with his ſublime Perfections; and point out to "Others his infinite Power, his unerring Wiſdom, "his boundleſs Benignity; this is, according to "my Opinion, a more *ſubſtantial* Act of Devotion, "than to ſlay Hecatombs of Victims at his Altar, "or kindle Mountains of Spices into Incenſe *."—*Theron*, after pauſing a few Minutes, thus reſumed the Diſcourſe.

Ther. When ſome Maſter-builder undertakes to erect a magnificent Edifice, He begins with the leſs decorated, but more ſubſtantial Parts. Thoſe which

* Gal. *de Uſu Part.* Lib. III.

are to *ſupport*, or thoſe which are to *contain* the reſt. This Order, if You pleaſe, We will follow, in conſidering "the earthly Houſe of our Ta-"bernacle *."

Firſt, You have a Syſtem of *Bones*; caſt into a Variety of Moulds; enlarged or contracted into a Variety of Sizes. All *ſtrong*, that they may commodiouſly bear up the Machine; yet *light*, that they may not encumber or clog the Animal. Some *continuous*, and ſolid throughout. Some *bored* with an internal Cavity, to contain the moiſtening Marrow; and *perforated* with exceedingly fine Ducts, to admit the nouriſhing Veſſels.—Inſenſible themſelves, they are *covered* with a Membrane † of exquiſite Senſibility. Which warns them of the Approach, and ſecures them from the Annoyance, of any injurious Friction. At the ſame Time, it preſerves the adjoining muſcular Parts, from being fretted in their Action, by the hard and rough Subſtance of the Bones.—Their *Figures* are always moſt preciſely fitted to their Uſes. They are generally larger at the Extremities, than in the Middle; that they may be

* 2 *Cor.* v. 1. St. *Paul* very pertinently compares the bodily Structure to *a Houſe*. And adds, in that Strain of godly Edifying, which runs through all his Writings, our *earthly and tent-like* Habitation, επιγειος οικια τε σκηνες. Referring to its *mean Original*, as it was formed out of the Duſt; and to its *ſhort Continuance*, as it muſt ſoon return to Duſt again. Being, though commodious as a Houſe, yet tranſitory as a Tent: not like the *everlaſting Mountains*, which ſtand fixed and rooted to the Center; but like thoſe *portable Tenements*, which are ſet up in the Evening, are taken down in the Morning, and then their Place is known no more.—The Word *Booth*, would give a more clear and exact Idea to the *Engliſh* Reader, than *Tabernacle*.

† The *Perioſteum*.

be joined more firmly, and not ſo eaſily diſlocated. —The Manner of their *Articulation* is truly admirable *, and remarkably various: yet never varied, without demonſtrating ſome wiſe Deſign, and anſwering ſome valuable End. Frequently, when two are united, the one is nicely rounded, and capped with a ſmooth Subſtance; the other is ſcooped into a Hollow of the ſame Dimenſions, to receive the poliſhed Knob; and both are lubricated with an unctuous Fluid, to yield the readieſt Rotation in the Socket.

The *Feet* compoſe the firmeſt and neateſt Pedeſtal: infinitely beyond all that Statuary or Architecture can accompliſh; capable of altering its Form, and extending its Size, as different Circumſtances require. Beſides performing the Office of a Pedeſtal, they contain a Set of the niceſt Springs; which place the Body in a Variety of graceful Attitudes, and qualify it for a Multiplicity of advantageous Motions. For the decent Step, and the ſtately Stride; the Dance which ſwims, and the Race We run.—The undermoſt Part of the Heel, and the Extremity of the Sole, are ſhod with a tough, inſenſible, ſinewy Subſtance. This We may call, a Kind of *natural Sandal*. It never wears out; never wants Repair; and always prevents that undue Compreſſion of the Veſſels, which the Weight of the Body, in walking or ſtanding, might otherwiſe occaſion.—The *Legs* and *Thighs*, are like ſubſtantial and ſtately Columns †; articulated in ſuch a Manner,

* *Mirabiles Commiſſuras habent.* CIC.

† Styled therefore by the ſacred Philoſopher, *The ſtrong Men*, Eccleſ. xii. 3. And compared, by the ſame

ner, that they adminiſter moſt commodiouſly to the Act of Walking, yet obſtruct not the eaſy Poſture of Sitting. The Legs ſwell out, towards the Top, with a genteel Projection; and are wrought off, towards the Bottom, with neat Diminutions. Which Variation leſſens their Bulk, at the ſame Time that it increaſes their Beauty.

The *Ribs*, turned into a regular Arch, are gently moveable, for the Act of Reſpiration. They form a ſecure Lodgment for the Lungs and the Heart: which, being ſome of the moſt diſtinguiſhed and important Organs of Life, have their Reſidence fortified by this ſtrong ſemicircular Rampart *.—The *Backbone* is intended, not only to ſtrengthen the Body, and ſuſtain its moſt capacious Store-rooms; but alſo to bring down that Communication of the Brain, which is uſually termed the *ſpinal Marrow*. As an open Channel, it conveys, as a well-cloſed Caſe,

beautiful Writer, to *Pillars of Marble*, Cant v. 15.—As theſe are the ſtrongeſt Parts of the Body, and the Support of all the other, hence, I preſume, aroſe that *proverbial* Expreſſion, which occurs in the Hiſtory of *Samſon*, שוק על־ירך Judg. xv. 8. Rendered by the *Septuagint*, not very exactly, κνημην επι μηρον; by our *Engliſh* Tranſlators, rather too vulgarly, as well as ſomewhat inaccurately, *Hip and Thigh*. I believe, the Word שוק ſignifies Here, as it certainly ſignifies in many other Places, what the *Latins* call *Armus*. And that the Image is taken from ſome robuſt and fierce Animal, whoſe *Shoulders* before, and whoſe *Thighs* behind, are broken in Pieces. Then, what Miſchief can He do? What Reſiſtance can He make? He is utterly diſabled. So that the Expreſſion ſeems to denote (and might perhaps, without Violence to the Original, be tranſlated) *A total Overthrow*.

* *Thou haſt fenced me*, ſecured my inward and vital Parts, *with Bones and Sinews*, Job x. 11.—*Crates Pectoris*, is *Virgil*'s Expreſſion.

Caſe, it guards this vital Silver *; and, by ſeveral commodious Outlets, tranſmits the animating Treaſure into all the inferior Parts. Was it only large, ſtrait, and hollow, it might have ſerved theſe ſeveral Purpoſes. But then the Loins muſt have been inflexible, and every Man impaled (not by the Executioner, but by Nature) on a Stake co-eval with his Exiſtence. To avoid which, it conſiſts of very ſhort Bones, cloſely knit together by intervening Cartilages. This Peculiarity of Structure prevents Diſlocation; and gives the main Pillar of our Frame the *Pliancy* of an *Oſier*, even while it retains the *Firmneſs* of an *Oak*.—By this Means, it is a Kind of continued Joint; capable of various Inflections, without bruiſing the ſoft medullary Subſtance, which fills its Cavity; without intercepting the nervous Fluid, which is to be detached from this grand Reſervoir; or diminiſhing that Strength, which is neceſſary to ſupport all the upper Stories.—A Formation ſo very peculiar in any other of the Solids, muſt have been attended with great Inconveniencies. Here, it is unſpeakably ſerviceable. Is, both for Workmanſhip and Situation, a Maſter-piece of creating Skill, never enough to be admired.

The *Arms*, pendent on either Side, are exactly proportioned to each other; that the Equilibrium of the Structure may not be diſconcerted. Theſe, being the Guards which defend †, and the Miniſters which ſerve the whole Body, are fitted for the moſt

diver-

* This is ſuppoſed to be the Part, which *Solomon* deſcribes by *The ſilver Cord:* and is indeed like a Cord, on Account of its *Shape*; like Silver, on Account of its *Colour*. Eccleſ. xii. 6.

† Called, in *Solomon*'s figurative but elegant Sketch of Anatomy, *The Keepers of the Houſe*, Eccleſ. xii. 3.

diverſified and *extenſive* Operations. Firm with Bone, yet not weighty with Fleſh; and capable of performing, with ſingular Expedition and Eaſe, all Manner of uſeful Motions. They bend inwards, and turn outwards, they riſe upwards, and ſtoop downwards; they wheel about, and throw themſelves into whatever Direction We pleaſe.—To theſe are annexed the *Hands*; and all terminated by the *Fingers*. Which are, not like the Arms, of the ſame Length, and of an equal Bigneſs; but in both Reſpects different. Which gives them a more graceful Appearance, and a much greater Degree of Uſefulneſs. Were they all Fleſh, they would be *comparatively* impotent: were they one entire Bone, they would be *utterly inflexible*. But conſiſting of various little Bones, and a Multitude of Muſcles, what Shape can they not aſſume? What Service can they not perform?—Being placed at the End of the Arm, the Sphere of their Action is exceedingly enlarged. This advantageous Situation realizes the Fable of *Briareus*; and renders a Pair of Hands, as ſerviceable as an Hundred.—The Extremities of the Fingers, are an Aſſemblage of tendonous Fibres, moſt acutely ſenſible *. Which, notwithſtanding the Delicacy of their

* So very acute is the Senſibility of theſe Parts, that, I am informed, it furniſhes the *Tribunal* of *Inquiſition*, with one of the moſt refined Expedients in the *Art* of *Torture*. A ſtrong Quill, ſharpened by the Pen-knife, and dipped in ſome inflammable Liquor, is thruſt deep between the Nail and the Finger. When the Quill has cut its Way through the ſhivering Nerves; and ſtands planted, like a Dagger, amidſt the guſhing Blood; ſome barbarous Hand ſets Fire to the Extremity. The keen Point, the ſlow Flame, and both in the Seat of the moſt lively Senſation, put the miſerable Sufferer to the *moſt excruciating* Pain.

their Texture, are deſtined to almoſt inceſſant Employ, and frequently exerciſed among rugged Objects. For this Reaſon, they are overlaid with the *Nails*, a Sort of horny Expanſion: which, like a Ferule, hinders the Fleſh from being ungracefully flattened; and, like a Sheath *, preſerves the tender Parts from injurious Impreſſions.

In the Miniſtry of the Hands, and Activity of the Fingers, We poſſeſs a Caſe of the *fineſt Inſtruments*, or a Collection of the *nobleſt Utenſils*. Qualifying Us for the Execution of every Work, which the projecting Genius can deviſe, or the laviſh Fancy crave.—To theſe We are obliged for the beautiful Statues, which have often entertained our Eyes, in yonder ſolitary Walks; and even for that melodious Trumpet, which now addreſſes our Ears, from the Summer-houſe on the Fiſh-pond.—Theſe raiſe the lofty Column, and turn the ſpacious Arch. Theſe ſwell the majeſtic Dome, and adjuſt the commodious Apartment. Architecture, with all her ſtriking Beauties, and all her rich Benefits, are the Creation of the human Hand.—Yielding to the Strength of the Hand, the talleſt Firs fall to the Ground, and the largeſt Oaks deſcend from the Mountains. Faſhioned by the Dexterity of the Hand, they accommodate the Sailor with a *floating Warehouſe*; and circulate, from *Britain* to *Japan*, the Productions of Nature, and the Improvements of Art.—Obedient to the human Hand, Metals aſcend from their ſubterraneous Beds; and compoſe the moſt ſubſtantial Parts of that *curious Machine* †, which tranſmits far and near, to the Monarch's Palace, and to the Peaſant's Hut, ſuch

* *Digitis Munimina.* † The Printing-preſs.

ſuch Treaſures of Wiſdom and Knowledge, as *the Gold and Cryſtal cannot equal* *.

Among the *Egyptians*, the Hand was the Symbol of Strength: among the *Romans*, it was an Emblem of Fidelity: and I think, it may, among all Nations, be looked upon as the Enſign of *Authority*. It is the original and the univerſal Sceptre; that which not only repreſents, but aſcertains our Dominion, over all the Elements, and over every Creature.—Though Providence has not given Us the Strength of the Horſe, the Swiftneſs of the Greyhound †, or the

* Job xxviii. 17.

† I once heard a Gentleman, famous for his philoſophical Abilities, cenſure the Formation of the human Body; becauſe it is not ſo commodiouſly fitted for *Swiftneſs*, as the Bodies of ſome other Animals. But I think this Objector's Sagacity, notwithſtanding his great Reputation, was no more to be admired than his Modeſty.

His *Modeſty*, it is certain, was none of the moſt eminent. Becauſe, it preſumed to diſpute the Propriety, or rather to deny the Truth of that grand Encomium, which OMNISCIENCE itſelf pronounced on the Works of Creation; *Behold!* they are *good*; *all* good; all *very* good.—Neither was his *Sagacity* the moſt extraordinary. Becauſe, it found Fault with a magnificent Monarch, for not breeding up the young Prince to the Buſineſs of a Running-footman. Shall the royal Heir be ſet to perform this Drudgery of the Heels? Shall He not rather command and enjoy the Performance of it from his Vaſſals?

This Objection is no leſs *ſtale*, than ſour. It was made in St. *Chryſoſtom*'s Time, and is very judiciouſly anſwered by his Pen. The learned Reader, I hope, will not be diſpleaſed, to peruſe the Paſſage in the Original; and the Unlearned, I promiſe myſelf, will allow me the Honour of being his Interpreter.

Τι δηποτε ει βασιλευς των αλογων εστιν ο ανθρωπος, και ρωμη και οξυτητι και ταχει πολλα των ζωων αυτου πλεονεκτει; και γαρ ταχυτερον ιππος ανθρωπου, και τληπικωτερον βους, και κουφοτερον αετος, και ισχυροτερον

the sagacious Scent of the Spaniel; yet, directed by the Understanding, and enabled by the Hand, We can

ισχυροτερον λεων.—Τι ουν αν ειποιμεν προς ταυτα; οτι και ενθευθεν μαλιστα εισομεθα του Θεου την Σοφιαν, και την τιμην, ην ημας ετιμησε· ταχυτερον μεν ιππος ανθρωπου, αλλ' εις αποδημιας ταχος επιτηδειοτερον ανθρωπος ιππου· ιππος μεν γαρ και απαντων οξυτατος και αλκιμωτατος η, μολις διακοσιους δραμειται της ημερας σταδιους· ανθρωπος δε υποζευξας ιππους εκ διαδοχης πολλους, και δισχιλιους δυνησεται σταδιους διανυσαι· ωστε οπερ εκεινω το ταχος, τουτω ο λογισμος και η τεχνη παρεσχεμεθα πλειονος της υπερβολης. Ανδρ. ια.

If Man is, as your religious Folks pretend, Lord of the irrational Creation; how comes it to pass, that many Animals exceed Him in Vigour, in Speed, and other bodily Endowments? The Horse is swifter, and the Ox more robust; the Eagle soars to greater Heights, and the Lion possesses superiour Strength.—How shall We reply to such Cavils? We will more than confute them. They shall serve as an Argument, to prove the unsearchable Wisdom of the CREATOR; and as a Topic, to display the honourable Regard, which He hath shewn to Mankind. We allow, that the Horse is swifter than his Master. Yet, with all his Swiftness, He is not able to take such long Journies, or to perform them so expeditiously. A Horse, be He the fleetest and strongest of the Kind, will hardly hold out, to go fourscore Miles in a Day. Whereas Man, by taking several Changes of Horses for his Saddle, or several Sets of Horses for his Chaise, will travel, in the same Time, a greater Number of Miles. Therefore, what the vigorous Sinew and the nimble Foot are to the Horse; that, and abundantly more, the contriving Head and the executing Hand are to Man.

Let me add the eloquent Preacher's Expostulation. Which is pertinent and spirited; and not the worse, for a Spice of *wholesome* Invective; mingled with a Spark of *decent* Indignation. Οταν ουν ο δεσποτης, ο απο του μη οντος εις το ειναι παραγαγων, καλα και πανυ καλα τα δημιουργηματα προσειποι, τις αν τολμησειε, καν αυτομανιας η πεπληρωμενος, διαραι το σομα και αντιφθεγεασθαι τοις υπο του Θεου ρηθεισιν; *Since then the CREATOR himself has pronounced all his Works to be consummately good; who shall dare to controvert* his *Judgment, or detract from* their *Excellency? This were an Excess of Arrogance, little short of Madness!*

can ſubject them to our Will; turn them to our Advantage; and, in this Senſe, make them all *our own*.—Theſe Hands (ſurpriſing to relate!) theſe *ſhort* Hands have found out a Way, whereby they can dive to the Bottom of the Ocean; can penetrate the Bowels of the Earth; and reach from Shore to Shore. Theſe *feeble* Hands can manage the Wings of the Wind; can arm themſelves with the Rage of the Fire; and preſs into their Service the forcible Impetuoſity of the Waters. — How eminent is the Dignity! How extenſive the Agency of the Hand! It would require more Eloquence, than your Orator poſſeſſed, to diſplay the former; and more Pages, than your Book contains, to deſcribe the latter.—How greatly then are We indebted to our indulgent CREATOR, for accommodating Us with this moſt uſeful, this moſt diſtinguiſhing, this invaluable Member!

Above all, is the *Head*; a majeſtic Dome, elevated on the Neck, and deſigned for the Reſidence of the Brain. It is framed in exact Conformity to this important Purpoſe; ample, to receive; ſtrong, to uphold; and firm, to defend, what is the Origin of all our Senſe and all our Motion.—As the Head reſembles the *General*'s Tent in an Army, or the *Monarch*'s Palace in a City; it has a Communication eſtabliſhed with all, even the moſt inferior and remote, Parts of the Syſtem. It has Outlets and Avenues, for the ready Diſpatch of Couriers to all Quar-

Galen, if I remember aright, allowed *Epicurus* an hundred Years, to find out a more commodious Shape, Situation, or Texture, for any one Part of the human Body. And I believe, if all the Angels in Heaven had ſtudied to this Day, they could not have given a fairer or a more correct Edition of this living Volume.

Quarters; and for the Reception of ſpeedy Intelligence, on every intereſting Occaſion. It is furniſhed with Lodgments, wherein to poſt Centinels of various Characters, and appointed for various Offices.—To expedite their Operations, whether they are employed in reconnoitring what paſſes *without*, or examining what claims Admittance *within*; the whole turns upon a curious Pivot, moſt nicely contrived, to afford the largeſt and freeſt Circumvolutions.

This ſtately Capital, is ſcreened from Heat; defended from Cold; and very much beautified, by a copious Growth of *Hair*. Which flows down from the parted Forelock in decent Curls; and hangs, mantling on the Cheeks, cluſtering on the Shoulders.—A Decoration *, incomparably more *delicate*, than any or all the Orders of Architecture know how to compoſe; and ſo perfectly *light*, that it no way encumbers, nor any way incommodes the Wearer.

* *Abſalom*'s Hair was reckoned a diſtinguiſhing Part of his Beauty, 2 *Sam.* xiv. 26.—The Amiableneſs of the Church, in the exemplary Converſation of true Believers, is diſplayed by the ſame Ornament. *Thy Hair is as a Flock of Goats, that* are ſeen afar off, and *appear* in a pendent Attitude *from* the Summit of *Mount Gilead*; moſt agreeably adorning the Place, and detaining the Spectator's Eye. *Cant.* iv. 1. I prefer the Expoſition of *Arias Montanus*, שגולשו *quæ pendent, quæ prominent*. As it takes in a Circumſtance, which correſponds with the *penſile* Poſition of the Hair; renders the Compariſon more *full* and *exact*; and is, according to the Obſervation of a moſt accurate Judge, one of the chief *Remarkables* in ſuch a Proſpect:

Non ego vos poſthac, viridi projectus in Antro,
Dumoſâ pendere *procul* de Rupe *videbo.* VIRG.

While many Animals creep on the Ground: while all of them are prone in their Poſture, or their Aſpect; the Attitude of Man is *erect* *.—Which is by far the moſt *graceful*; has an Air of Dignity, and beſpeaks Superiority, and is ſuited to the Poſt of Command.—It is by far the moſt *commodious*; enables Us to ſurvey the Univerſe, and contemplate the Heavens; fits Us for the Proſecution of every grand Scheme, and facilitates the Succeſs of all our extenſive Deſigns.—It is likewiſe attended with the greateſt *Safety*; being, if not leſs than any other Poſition expoſed to Dangers, yet more happily contrived to repel or avoid them.

Aſp. May it not likewiſe remind Us of our exalted Original, and our ſublime End? Our *Original*, which was the Breath of the ALMIGHTY, and the Spirit of the MOST HIGH. Our *End*, which is not the Soil We tread on, or any of its low Productions, but the Heaven of Heavens, and the *Things that are above*.

But not to divert from our Subject; which, in my Friend's Manner of handling it, is as entertaining as it is inſtructive.—The Bones (to carry on your own Alluſion) are only the *Rafters*, the *Beams*, the *Shell* of the living Edifice. You have raiſed the Walls, and laid the Floors. You have made the proper Diviſions, and left the neceſſary Apertures. But, in every finiſhed Houſe, the Roof is covered, and the Rooms are wainſcoted. The Saſhes are hung, and the Doors turn upon their Hinges. The Grates

* *Two of far nobler Shape, erect and tall,*
Godlike erect! With native Honour clad,
In naked Majeſty, ſeem'd Lords of all. MILTON.

Grates are fixed, and the Stairs afcend. *Within*, the Lodgings are furnifhed; *without*, the Front is ornamented. All is rendered commodious for domeftic Uſe, and graceful to the external View.

Ther. This likewiſe is executed by the ſovereign, the Divine ARTIFICER *.—Here are *Ligaments*; a tough and ſtrong Arrangement of Fibres; to unite the ſeveral Limbs; and render, what would otherwiſe be a disjointed unwieldy Jumble, a well-compacted and eaſy-manageable Syſtem.—*Membranes*, or thin and flexile Funicles; appointed to enwrap the fleſhy Parts; to form a Connection between ſome, and make a Separation between others †.

Arteries, the Rivers of our little World ‡, or the Aqueducts of the organized Metropolis. Some of which aſcend to the Head: others ſpread themſelves over the Shoulders: ſome extend to the Arms: ſome deſcend to the Feet: and ſtriking out, as they go, into numberleſs ſmaller Canals, viſit the Streets, the Alleys, and every *individual* Apartment of the vital City.—Theſe, being wide at their Origin, and leſſening as they branch themſelves, check the rapid Impetus of the Blood. To ſuſtain this Shock, they are endued with uncommon Strength: by perform-

* Ὁ ἀρχιτέκτων Θεός.

† The Inteſtines are *faſtened* to each other by the *Meſentery*. The Breaſt is *divided* into two Cavities by the *Mediaſtinum*. Both which are reckoned among the Membranes.

‡ A human Body was called by the Antients, The *Microcoſm*; that is, The World in Miniature. An Abridgment or Epitome, of all that is convenient and uſeful, of all that is elegant and majeſtic, in the whole Syſtem of created Things.

ing this Service, they oblige the crimſon Current to paſs into the *narroweſt Defiles*, and diſtribute itſelf into all Quarters.—The Blood, thrown from the Heart, dilates the Arteries, and their own elaſtic Force contracts them. By which Means, they *vibrate*, in proper Places, very perceivably againſt the Finger; bring Advices of the utmoſt Importance to the Phyſician; and very much aſſiſt Him, both in diſcovering the Nature of Diſeaſes, and preſcribing for their reſpective Cures.—The larger Arteries, where-ever the Body is formed for Incurvation, are ſituate on the *bending* Side: leſt, being ſtretched to an improper Length by the Inflection, their Dimenſions ſhould be leſſened, and the circulating Fluid retarded.—They are not, like ſeveral of the conſiderable Veins, laid ſo near the Surface, as to be protruſive of the Skin; but are depoſited to a *proper Depth* in the Fleſh. And, generally ſpeaking, the larger their Size, the deeper is their Situation. Which renders them more ſecure from external Accidents; and enables them, like a main Pipe lodged in the Center of a Street, to tranſmit their ſmaller Ducts, more eaſily and more ſpeedily, to the Extremity of their ſeveral Spheres. This Situation conceals likewiſe thoſe Starts and Reſilitions of the Pulſe, which, if apparent, would diſcompoſe the moſt ſedate, and diſfigure the moſt comely Countenance.—Could We caſt our Eye upon the River, which runs through the neighbouring Meadow, We might obſerve ſeveral Mills interſecting the Stream. The Waters at thoſe Places, if not entirely ſtopped, drain away very ſlowly. In Conſequence of this Obſtruction, the lower Channels would be ſunk dry, and the upper

Ones ſwelled into a Flood. To obviate both theſe Inconveniencies, *Low-ſhots* are provided: which, carrying off the Surcharge, prevent a Glut above, and ſupply the Banks below. In thoſe Parts of the Body, which are moſt liable to Preſſure, much the ſame Expedient takes place. The Arteries *inoſculate*; or, breaking into a new Track, they fetch a little Circuit, in order to return and communicate again with the main Road. So that, if any Obſtacle blocks up or ſtraitens the direct Paſſage; the Current, by diverting to this new Channel, eludes the Impediment; maintains an uninterrupted Flow; and ſoon regains its wonted Courſe.

Veins are appointed to receive the Blood from the Arteries, and reconvey it to the Heart.—Small at their Riſe, and enlarging as they advance, they are void of any Pulſation. In theſe, the Preſſure of the circulating Fluid, is not near ſo forcible as in the arterial Tubes: for which Reaſon, their Texture is conſiderably ſlighter. Such an exact *Oeconomiſt* is Nature, even amidſt all her *Liberality* *!—In many of theſe Canals, the Current, though widening continually, and acquiring a proportionable Increaſe of Gravity, is obliged to puſh its Way againſt the Perpendicular. By which Circumſtance, it is expoſed to the Hazard of falling back, and overloading the Veſſels; if not of ſuppreſſing the animal Motion. For a Security againſt this Danger, *Valves* are interpoſed at proper Diſtances. Which are no Hindrance to the regular Paſſage, but prevent the

 Reflux;

* A parallel Inſtance of Frugality is obſervable in the Arteries. Whoſe Coats are ſpun *thinner*, as the Diameter of the Veſſels becomes *ſmaller*, and the Preſſure of the Blood *weaker*.

Reflux; ſuſtain the augmented Weight; and facilitate a Progreſs to the grand Receptacle. This auxiliary Contrivance comes in, where the Blood is conſtrained to climb; but is diſmiſſed where the ſteep Aſcent ceaſes, and ſuch a Precaution would be needleſs.

Here are *Glands*, whoſe Office it is, to filtrate the paſſing Fluid. Each of theſe Glands is an Aſſemblage of Veſſels, complicated and intervolved, with ſeeming Confuſion, but with perfect Regularity. As ſome Kind of Sieves tranſmit the Duſt, and retain the Corn; others bolt out the Meal, and hold back the Bran; ſo, ſome of theſe glandulous Strainers draw off the fineſt, others the groſſeſt Parts of the Blood. Some, like the Diſtiller's Alembic, *ſublimate* *; others, like the common Sewers, *defæcate* †. Each forms a Secretion, far more curious than the moſt admired Operations of Chemiſtry; while all are neceſſary for the Support of Life, or conducive to the Comfort of the Animal.—*Muſcles*, wove in Nature's niceſt Loom; compoſed of the ſlendereſt Fibres, yet endued with incredible Strength; faſhioned after a Variety of Patterns, but all in the higheſt Taſte for Elegance, Conveniency, and Uſefulneſs.—Theſe, with their *Tendons* annexed,

* The glandulous Subſtance of the *Brain*, which ſecretes the animal Spirits.

† The *Liver* and *Kidneys*. The former of which ſeparates the *Gall*. The latter drains off a *Flaid*, which, being ſufficiently known, need not be named. I could wiſh, it had not been ſo explicitly and coarſely mentioned, in our Tranſlation of the beſt of Books. But that We had rendered the Original in 1 *Kings* xiv. 10. *Every Male*; in *Iſai.* xxxvi. 12. *Eat and drink their own Excrements.*

annexed, constitute the Instruments of Motion. The former, contracting their Substance, operate like the Pulley in Mechanics. The latter, resembling the Cord, are fastened to a Bone, or some Partition of Flesh: and, following the muscular Contraction, actuate the Part into which they are inserted. This, and all their Functions they execute, not like a sluggish Beast of Burden, but quick as the Lightning.—*Nerves*, very minute Tubes; derived from the Brain, and permeated by an exquisitely subtle Fluid. Which, gliding into the Muscles, sets them on work; diffuses the Power of Sensation through the Body; or, returning upon any Impression from without, gives all needful Intelligence to the Soul.—*Vesicles*, distended with an unctuous Matter; in some Places, compose a soft Cushion * for Nature; in other Places, they fill up her Vacuities, and smooth her Inequalities. *Inwardly*, they supple the several Movements of the active Machine. *Outwardly*, they render its Appearance plump, well proportioned, and graceful.

It is said of the virtuous Woman; *She is not afraid of the Snow for her Household; for all her Household are clothed with Scarlet* †; or, as We read in the Margin, *with double Garments* ‡. Whether the admitted or

* The *Calf* of the *Leg*, for Instance. Whose large Collection of Muscles, intermingled with Fat, is of singular Service to those important Bones. It flanks and fortifies them, like a *strong Bastion*. It supports and cherishes them, like a *soft Pillow*. What is no less pleasing to observe, it accommodates and defends them on that very Side, where they most frequently rest their Weight, and where they are least capable of being guarded by the Eye.

† Prov. xxxi. 21.

‡ See Gen. vi. 19, 20. Where the Word כפלים occurs

or the ejected Tranſlation is beſt, I am not a competent Judge. But that the ever-bountiful GOD has, in this moſt warm, comfortable, and ſecure Manner, clothed our vital Parts, is an undoubted Fact. One of the two Garments, the *Fleſh*, has already been examined. Another, the *Skin* *, is ſtill to be conſidered. This is a Kind of Surtout, exactly fitted, and ſuperinduced over the Whole. Like our LORD's Veſture, it is *without Seam, from the Top throughout.* It conſiſts of the moſt delicate Net-work; whoſe Meſhes † are minute, and whoſe Threads are ‡ multiplied, even to a Prodigy. —The Meſhes ſo *minute*, that nothing paſſes them, which

in this Signification. Which may, in the Place quoted above, not improperly be rendered, *with Pairs* or *with two Suits.*

* There are two Coats of Skin on the human Fleſh. Though *Theron* ſeems to take Notice of one only; or elſe to compriſe them both in one Repreſentation. The outermoſt is ſtyled *Cuticula*, or the *Scarf-ſkin.* The innermoſt, called *Cutis*, is the true and proper Skin. The firſt is that ſoft whitiſh Tegument, which riſes in the Puſtule of a Bliſter. The other is that reddiſh and very tender Part, which appears, when the Bliſter is broke, and the dead Skin taken off. The former is totally void of Senſe; and very happily provided to ſcreen the latter. Screen it not only from the Stroke of Injuries, but even from the Impreſſions of the Air. Which, mild as it may feel to the *ſheathed*, would be too rough and ſharp for the *naked* Nerves.

There ſeems to be an Alluſion to this Particular, in that remarkable Expreſſion, *Skin for Skin*, עור בעד עור *Job* ii. 4. *Skin even unto Skin*; the very innmoſt Skin, which cannot be taken away, without the greateſt Loſs, and ſevereſt Pain. Yet, even this *Loſs* a Man would ſuffer, this *Pain* He would endure, in order to preſerve precious Life.

† The Pores of the *Cuticula.*

‡ The nervous Fibres, and other Veſſels of the *Cutis.*

which is discernable by the Eye; though they discharge, every Moment, Myriads and Myriads of superfluous Incumbrances from the Body. The Steam, arising from the warm Business transacted within, is carried off by these real, though imperceptible Funnels *. This Evacuation constitutes, what We usually call, *insensible Perspiration*.—The Threads so *multiplied*, that neither the Point of the smallest Needle, nor the incomparably nicer Spear of a Gnat, nor even the invisible Lancet of a Flea, can pierce any single Part, without causing an uneasy Sensation and a Suffusion of Blood: consequently, without wounding, even by so small a Puncture, both a Nerve and a Vein †.

The Veins, either pervading, or lying parallel with, this fine transparent Coat, *beautify* the human Structure; those Parts especially, which are most conspicuous, and intended for public View. The pliant Wrist, and the taper Arm, they variegate with an Inlay of living Sapphire. They spread Ver-

* These are somewhere prettily styled, *cutaneous Chimnies*; and no Wonder they are imperceptible, if, as Mr. *Lewenhoeck* affirms, a single Grain of Sand will cover no less than 125,000.

† A *Blood-vessel* at least. Compared with these Vessels, the fine *filmy Threads*, which, on some bright autumnal Morning, float in the Air, or hang on the Stubble, must be large as a Bell-rope, or bulky as a Cable.—Such Tubes, One would think, should *burst* at every Breath We draw, or even *break* with their own Fineness. Yet, they are the Conduit-pipes, which convey the vital Fluid from and to the grand Reservoir. And so admirable is their Texture, that they will out-last the Strength of Lead, or the Heart of Oak: *these* wearing away, *those* growing stronger, by Use.

Vermillion over the Lips *, and plant Roſes in the Cheeks. While the Eye, tinged with gloſſy Jet, or ſparkling with the Blue of Heaven, is fixed in an Orb of poliſhed Cryſtal †. Inſomuch that the earthly Tabernacle exhibits the niceſt Proportions, and diſplays the richeſt Graces. Such *nice Proportions*, as afford the moſt correct Model for Statuary and Architecture: ſuch *rich Graces*, as the Canvaſs never bore, as Painting imitates in vain.

Aſp. How juſt in itſelf, and how pertinent to our Purpoſe, is that well-known Acknowledgment of the ſacred and royal Anatomiſt; "*I am curiouſly* "*wrought* ‡! There is a Variety, a Regularity, "and an Elegance, in the Texture of my Body; "in

* *Thy Lips are like a Thread of Scarlet*, Cant. iv. 3. Like a *Thread*, for their delicate Shape; like a Thread of *Scarlet*, for their glowing Colour.

† *Solomon* has compared the Eyes to *The Fiſh-pools in* Heſhbon. A Compariſon, as juſt, as it is noble.—Obſerve the Eye in the human Structure, and a fine Piece of Water in the rural Proſpect. Each is a very ſmall Part, yet eminently ornamental to the Whole.—Each enlivens the Scene. Without Water, the Landſchape is dull and dreary; without an Eye, the Countenance would be blank and hagged.—A ſhining Kind of Luſtre, ſparkles in one; trembles in the other; radiants from both. Both are a Source of innumerable Advantages, to their reſpective Subjects.—'Tis probable, thoſe Fiſh-pools in *Heſhbon*, being artificially made, were exactly correſpondent in Size, in Form, and Situation. If ſo, the Parallel is remarkably perfect, and the Simile receives the higheſt Finiſhing. See *Cant.* vii. 4.

‡ The Original, רקמתי ſignifies *finely wrought*, or *elegantly flouriſhed with a Needle*.—The Tranſlation adopted by our Liturgy is, in this Place, flat and inexpreſſive. The *Engliſh* Word *faſhioned*, has juſt the ſame Inferiority to the beautiful *Hebrew* Phraſe; as the *Badge*, tacked upon ſome poor Penſioner's Coat, has to the Star embroidered on a Nobleman's Breaſt. *Pſal.* cxxxix.

"in the Formation and Arrangement of these "Bones and Muscles, these Veins and Arteries; "resembling, shall I say?—rather, infinitely "surpassing, the most costly and admired Pieces of "Embroidery." Even those, which were wrought under the Direction of inspired Wisdom; and compose the rich sacerdotal Vestments *, or the grand and sacred Ornaments of the Tabernacle †.

It is one of the finest Similitudes, which the whole Circle of polite Arts could afford. And, as used by the *Hebrew* Poet as referring to the venerable Embellishments of the Sanctuary, receives a peculiar Dignity. Yet every Comparison, fetched from the Performances of Mankind, must necessarily debase the matchless Subject.—All the Enrichments, which the Needle can give, or the most *splendid Silks* receive, are rude, are coarse, are mere Sack-cloth, when set in Opposition to the consummate Perfection of the fleshly Web. As indeed all the celebrated *Palaces*, *Amphitheatres*, *Temples*, which ever adorned the most magnificent Cities in the World, are but a Heap of Confusion, if compared with the Symmetry and Beauty of the bodily Fabric.—And, what is beyond measure marvelous, all these Wonders of Mechanism and Decoration arose—not from the purer Elements—not from the more refined Parts of the Creation—but from Dust, *Dust of the Ground* ‡. How easily, *Theron*, can that stupendous

ARTI-

* Exod. xxviii. 39. † Exod. xxvi. 36.

‡ *The* LORD GOD *formed Man of the Dust of the Ground*, Gen. ii. 7. Upon this Circumstance, St. *Chrysostom* very justly remarks; Τῳ πλῆθος της δοξης των δημιουργηματα της τεχνης το ευπορον και ευμηχανον, οτι εν πηλω και τεφρα τοιαυτην εσθηκεν ακριβειαν, και τοιαυτα αισθησεις, και ποικιλας και παμποικιλας. Ανδρ. ια.

ARTIFICER *renew* our Hearts, and transform our Souls into his own Image! Who could raiſe ſuch delicate, and majeſtic Edifices; the blooming Countenance, and the graceful Mien; the fine Turn of Shape, and the enchanting Harmony of Features; could raiſe them all from Particles—deſpicable Particles of the trodden Soil!

I could not forbear interpoſing this Remark. Becauſe, it tends to manifeſt our CREATOR's Glory, to encourage our Hopes, and ſtrengthen our Faith. Otherwiſe, I ſhould be angry with myſelf, for interrupting your Diſcourſe.—Pray, go on with your Deſcription of the animal Oeconomy. Only let me obſerve, That ſuch a Courſe of inceſſant Action, muſt *exhauſt* the Fluids; muſt *waſte* the Solids; and, unleſs both are ſupplied with proper Recruits, muſt gradually weaken, and at length totally deſtroy, the Machine.

Ther. For this Reaſon, it is furniſhed with the Organs, and endued with the Powers of *Nutrition*. —*Teeth*; the foremoſt, thin and ſharp; fitted to bite aſunder the Food, or cut * off ſuch a Portion, as the Mouth can conveniently manage. The hindermoſt, broad and ſtrong; indented, like the Surface of a Mill-ſtone †, with ſmall Cavities, and jagged with little Aſperities. Which qualify them to

* Called therefore, *Inciſivi*.

† Styled accordingly, *Molares*.—We find neither of theſe Kinds in the new-born Babe. As Milk is, for a conſiderable Time, its apparent Food, Teeth would be of no Service to the Infant itſelf. As it is to preſs the tender Nipple for this milky Suſtenance, Teeth would be painful and prejudicial to the Nurſe. Therefore Nature has *poſtponed* the Formation of theſe fine Implements, till they become both neceſſary and beneficial.

to grind in Pieces, whatever is tranſmitted to their Operation.—Were the Teeth, like our other Bones, covered with the uſual Membrane, the Act of *Chewing* would always occaſion great Uneaſineſs; and, when any hard Subſtance is eaten, might even lacerate the tender Tegument. Were they left without any Sort of Covering; they would ſuffer from the Inclemencies of the Air, and be liable to the Penetration of Liquors. In which Caſe, they muſt ſoon become ſoft and unfit for Service, or be corrupted, and entirely periſh. To guard againſt theſe Diſadvantages, they are curiouſly *glazed*, or overlaid with a neat *Enamel*; as white as Ivory, and harder than the Bone itſelf. Which renders them an Ornament to the Mouth *; ſecures them from various Injuries; and exempts them from Pain in the Office of Maſtication.

As the Rims and Cuſhions of a Billiard-table, keep the Ball from flying off; and ſend it back into the green Area, for repeated Eſſays of Skill; ſo the *Lips* prevent the Food from ſlipping out of the Mouth; and, aſſiſted by the Tongue, return it to the renewed Attrition of the Grinders.—While the Lips,

* This ornamental Furniture of the Mouth, is, in the grand *oriental* Manner, deſcribed by *Solomon*. *Thy Teeth are like a Flock of Sheep, that are even ſhorn, which come up from the Waſhing*, Cant. iv. 2. Growing, not ſingle, like the Noſe; not in Pairs, like the Eyes; but in Rows conſiderably numerous, *like a Flock*.—None riſing higher than the other; none ſtanding unduly prominent beyond another; but all ſet as true, as if they were ranged by the Compaſs; and making as regular an Appearance, as the Flocks *that are even ſhorn*.—They are clean alſo as the Fleeces which have no Spot, and white as the Colour of the pureſt Wool; like the Flocks *juſt come up from waſhing* in the cryſtal Stream.

Lips, in Concert with the Cheeks, are employed in this Work, their Motion compreſſes the circumjacent Glands; and, from innumerable little Orifices, a thin *pellucid Liquor* * exſudes. Which moiſtens the attenuated Food, and prepares it for more eaſy Digeſtion.—When the Mouth remains inactive, theſe Fountains are cloſed. But, when it is exerciſed, either in ſpeaking or eating, their Moiſture then being peculiarly neceſſary, they never fail to give out a ſufficient Quantity.

When the Soldier charges his Carbine, the Cartridge could not make its way to the Bottom, without the Protruſion of the Rammer †. Neither could

* The *Saliva* or Spittle.

† This, and the other Similitudes, it muſt be confeſſed, are *too mean* for the noble Occaſion. Neither do they, in *every* Circumſtance, quadrate with the Functions deſcribed. There is very little Affinity, between the Motion of the Muſcles, which miniſter to the Act of Swallowing, and the perpendicular Protruſion of the Rammer. The Compariſon is introduced, only to demonſtrate the Neceſſity of *ſome* propelling Force, in order to convey the Aliment into the proper Receptacle.

When We deſcant upon a Subject, of ſuch extenſive Contrivance, and of ſuch finiſhed Perfection, as the human Structure; it is ſcarce poſſible to find Similitudes, that will correſpond in *all* Particulars, or that can riſe to the *Dignity* of the Original. Yet if they tend, in any tolerable Degree, to explain its Formation, to diſplay its Uſes, and render its wonderful Oeconomy ſomewhat more intelligible, perhaps they may be allowed to take place.

I hope, it will be remembered, that *Theron* ſpeaks, not as an Adept in the Science, but as one whoſe higheſt Pretenſions are, to admire the Work, and adore the ARTIFICER. Which Acknowledgment may entitle Him to ſome candid Indulgence, in caſe He ſhould offend againſt the *preciſe anatomical* Exactneſs, either of Sentiment, or Expreſſion.

could the Food, which We receive at the Mouth, deſcend, by the Force of its own Weight, through a narrow and clammy Channel, into the Stomach. To effectuate therefore, and expedite its Paſſage, Muſcles, both *ſtrait* and *cirtular*, are provided. The former, enlarge the Cavity of the Throat, and afford a more eaſy Admittance; the latter, cloſing behind the deſcending Aliment, preſs it downwards, and finiſh the Deglutition.—Before the Food enters the Gullet, it muſt of neceſſity paſs over the Orifice of the *Wind-pipe*; conſequently, muſt be in no ſmall Danger of falling upon the Lungs. Which would, if not entirely obſtruct the Breath, yet occaſion violent Coughing *, and great Inconveniencies. To obviate this Evil, the all-foreſeeing CONTRIVER has placed a *moveable Lid*, or hung a *cartilaginous Draw-bridge* †. When any the ſmalleſt Particle of Food advances to the Stomach, this Lid is pulled down and ſhut cloſe; but, the very Moment the Morſel is ſwallowed, the Cover, inſtinctive as it were, ſprings up and leaves the Paſſage open. By this two-fold Artifice, the important Paſſage is always barred and made ſure, againſt any noxious Approaches; yet, is always left free for the neceſſary Acceſſion of Air, and commodious for the Purpoſes of Reſpiration.

When the Maltſter prepares his Grain for the Tranſmutations of the Brewhouſe; He ſuffers it to lie, ſeveral Hours, ſteeping in the Ciſtern; before it is fit, to be ſpread upon the Floor, or dried on the Kiln.

* This is what We experience, when, in eating or drinking, any Thing goes (as is commonly, and not improperly ſaid) *the wrong Way*.

† Called the *Epiglottis*.

Kiln. The Meat and Drink likewiſe muſt remain, a conſiderable Time, in the *Stomach*; before they are of a proper Conſiſtence and Temperature, either for the tender Coats, or the delicate Operation of the Bowels. For which Purpoſe, that great Receiver is made—ſtrong to bear—capacious to hold—and ſo curiouſly contrived, as to lay a *temporary Embargo* * upon its Contents. Here, they are lodged in the very Center of Warmth, and concocted by the moſt kindly Combination of Heat and Humidity. Here, they are ſaturated with other fermenting or diluting Juices; and are kneaded, as it were, by the Motion of the Stomach, and Compreſſion of the neighbouring Parts. So that every the minuteſt Fragment is ſeparated; the Whole is reduced to a *Tenuity*, abundantly finer than the exacteſt Grinding could effect; and all is worked up into the ſmootheſt, moſt *nicely mixed* Pulp imaginable.—From hence it is diſlodged, by a gently acting Force; and paſſes, by a gradual Tranſition, into the Cavity of the Inteſtines.

Near the Entrance, punctual as a Porter in his Lodge, waits the *Gall bladder* †; ready to transfuſe its acrimonious, but ſalutary Juices, on the advancing Aliment. Which *diſſolve* its remaining Viſcidities; *ſcour* the Paſſage of the Inteſtines; and keep all its fine Apertures clear.—This Bag, as the Stomach fills, is elevated by the Diſtention; as the Stomach empties, is proportionably depreſſed. The former Poſture brings on a Diſcharge, the latter occaſions

* Which is quite *contrary* to the Oeconomy of the Gullet; though they are not only contiguous to each other, but a Continuation of the *ſame* Tube.

† The *Gall-bladder* is ſituate upon the lower Margin of the Liver; and to ſecrete the *bilious* Juice, is ſuppoſed to be the principal Uſe of that largeſt of Glands.

ſions a Suppreſſion, of the *Bile*. It is furniſhed alſo with a Valve, of a very peculiar, but moſt convenient Form *; through which the deterſive Liquid, cannot haſtily pour, but muſt gently ooze.—Admirable Conſtruction! Which, without any Care or Conſciouſneſs of ours, prohibits an *immoderate* Effuſion, yet aſcertains the *needful* Supply.

Sufficiently charged with this adventitious Fluid, the nutritive Maſs purſues its Way through the *Inteſtines*. Whoſe Meanders, are incomparably more curious and wonderful, than the Mazes of the *Dædalean* Labyrinth. They are actuated with a worm-like or undulatory Motion †: which protrudes the received Aliment, and forces its fine milky Particles into the *Lacteal Veſſels*. Theſe are a Series of the moſt delicate *Strainers*; ranged, in countleſs Multitudes, all along the Sides of the winding Paſſage. Each ſo nicely framed, as to admit the nutrimental balmy Juices, and reject the groſs excrementitious Dregs.—Had the Inteſtines been *ſtrait*, they muſt have been *ſhort*. Then the Food might have gone through and eſcaped, without reſigning a ſufficient Quantity of its nouriſhing Particles. Therefore, this grandeſt of all the vital Ducts, is artfully convolved, that it may be greatly extended: that it may afford Nature an Opportunity, of *ſifting* more thoroughly whatever paſſes, and of detaining whatever may ſerve her Purpoſes. — Leſt ſuch Lengths of Entrails, ſhould be entangled among themſelves, or be cumbrous to the Wearer, they are packed into the neateſt Folds, and lie within a narrow Compaſs. They are at leaſt ſix Times

* A *ſpiral* Form.

† Styled *vermicular* or *periſtaltic*.

longer *, than the Body which contains them. Yet are they *lodged*, not *crouded*; in a *Part*, not in the *whole* Region, of the lower Belly. And amidſt this ſmall Space, have ſufficient Room to execute the niceſt and moſt important Functions.—Though the alimentary Subſtance can never miſtake its Way; yet it may, through ſome accidental Impediment, attempt to return backward. In this Caſe, a Valve intervenes; and renders, what would be extremely pernicious, almoſt always impracticable.—As the Whole proceeds in this ſerpentine Courſe, it is perpetually ſending off Detachments of *nutritious* Juices. In Conſequence of which, it would loſe its ſoft Temperature; might become rugged, and pain the tender Parts; perhaps, be hindered from ſliding on to its final Exit. To prevent ſuch an Obſtruction, Glands are poſted in proper Places †, and diſcharge a *lubricating* Fluid; which aids the Progreſs of the Maſs, and renews the Secretion of the Chyle. Till all that remains of the One, is clean drawn off; and the Other—But here You muſt excuſe me; and for my Neglect of farther Par-

* According to this Calculation, they muſt meaſure, in a pretty tall Man, more than *thirty-ſix Feet*.—The Subſtance of the Bowels, though *thin* to a Delicacy, is *ſtrong* to a Wonder. The Skin of an Ox-gut, I am told, will endure the Blows of the Gold-beater's Hammer, for many Months, nay for ſeveral Years.

† In the Bowels, which lie neareſt the Stomach, theſe Glands are *ſmaller* or *fewer*: becauſe, in thoſe Parts, the Aliment is copiouſly furniſhed with Moiſture. Whereas, in the Bowels, which are more remote from the Stomach, and receive the Food drained of a conſiderable Quantity of its Chyle, the lubricating Glands are either *multiplied* or *enlarged*. A moſt admirable Proviſion! Apparently diverſified, according to the ſeveral Changes of the Aliment; yet exactly adapted to the Exigencies of the Animal.

Particularity, your Author ſhall make an Apology; *Quemadmodum autem Reliquiæ Cibi depellantur, tum aſtringentibus ſe Inteſtinis, tum relaxantibus, haud ſane difficile dictu eſt: ſed tamen prætereundum eſt, ne quid habeat Injucunditatis Oratio* *.

The *Chyle*, drawn off by all the ſecretory Orifices, is carried along Millions of the fineſt Ducts †, and lodged in ſeveral *commodious Cells* ‡. As a Traveler, by baiting upon the Road, and taking proper Refreſhment, is better qualified to purſue his Journey: ſo the Chyle, diverting to thoſe little Inns, is mixed with a thin, diluting, watery Subſtance; which renders it more apt to flow, and more fit for Uſe.—From hence it is conveyed to one *common Receptacle* ‖, and mounts through a perpendicular Tube. When Proviſion or Ammunition is tranſmitted to an Army, it generally paſſes under an Eſcort of able Troops. As this milky Fluid is the immediate

 Support,

* Cicero *De Nat. Deor.*—As *Theron* avoids meddling with a Subject, which is become uſeleſs and putreſcent, I think myſelf obliged to imitate his *Delicacy*. Only I would add one Remark in the Notes, and ſhall beg leave to expreſs it in *Greek*. That if it ſhould prove, in any Degree, diſguſtful; it may have, at leaſt, the *negative* Merit, not to offend *many* Readers. Επει δε τα αποχωρουντα δυσχερη, απεστρεψε τους τουτων οχετους η φυσις, και απηνεγκεν η δυνατον προσωτατω απο των αιθησεων. Socrat. Memorab.

† Fine indeed! Since their *Orifices*, through which they admit the Chyle, are not diſcoverable even by the very *beſt Microſcopes*. To this prodigiouſly nice Conſtruction it is owing, that nothing enters the Subſtance of the Blood, but what is ſmaller than the ſmalleſt Arteries in the Syſtem, and thereby fitted to paſs through the fineſt capillary Veſſels, without cauſing any Obſtruction.

‡ The Glands of the Meſentery.

‖ The *Receptaculum Chyli*; a Reſervatory, placed near the left Kidney.

Support, and principal Nouriſhment of the whole Syſtem, its Conveyance is guarded with ſingular Caution. The *perpendicular Tube*, not having ſufficient Force of its own, is laid contiguous to the great Artery; whoſe ſtrong Pulſation drives on the creeping Fluid; enables it to overcome the ſteep Aſcent, and unload its precious Treaſure at the very Door of the Heart.—Here, it enters the Trunk of a large Vein, moſt conveniently opened for its Reception. It enters in a *ſlanting* or *oblique* Direction. By this Method of Approach, it avoids thwarting, and coincides with the purple Stream; which, inſtead of obſtructing its Admiſſion, expedites its Paſſage; and, inſtead of being a Bar to exclude it, becomes a Vehicle to waft it.—Its Entrance is farther ſecured by a Valve, whoſe Miniſtration is doubly ſerviceable: *ſhutting* the Aperture againſt the refluent Blood, in caſe it ſhould offer to obtrude itſelf; but *opening* a free, ſafe, and eaſy Avenue, to introduce this Manna of Nature.

The *Blood*, through every Stage of its ample Circuit, having ſuſtained great Expences; being laid under Contribution, by every Gland in the whole Syſtem; and having ſupplied Myriads of the capillary Veſſels, with Matter for inſenſible Perſpiration; muſt be very much impoveriſhed. But is moſt opportunely recruited, by this Acceſſion of Chyle.—Yet though *recruited*, it is not *refined*. In its preſent crude State, it is abſolutely unqualified to perform the vital Tour, or carry on the animal Functions. Therefore, by a grand Apparatus of muſcular Fibres, it is wafted into the *Lungs*; and pours a thouſand, thouſand Rills into either Lobe.—In the Cells, the ſpongy Cells of this *amazing Labra-*

tory, it imbibes the Influences of the external Air; its heterogeneous Parts are thoroughly incorporated; and its whole Subſtance is made cool, ſmooth, and florid.—Thus improved, thus exalted, it is tranſmitted to the left Ventricle of the HEART; a *ſtrong, active, indefatigable* * Muſcle; placed in the very Center of the Syſtem. Impelled by this beating Engine, Part ſhoots upward; and ſweeps, with a bounding Impetus, into the Head. There, it impregnates the prolific Fields of the Brain; and forms thoſe *ſubtle ſpirituous* Dews †, which impart

* *Indefatigable*—This is a very *diſtinguiſhing*, and no leſs *amazing* Property of the Heart. The large Muſcles of the Arm, or the much larger of the Thigh, are ſoon wearied. A Day's Labour, or a Day's Journey, will exhauſt their Strength. But the Muſcle, which conſtitutes the Heart, works through whole Weeks, whole Months, whole Years, and never becomes weary. Is equally a Stranger to *Intermiſſion* and *Fatigue*.—St. *Chryſoſtom* has made the ſame Remark concerning the Eye. Εννοησον αυτου το καλλος, και την δυναμιν την οπτικην, και πως τοσουτον επιων αερος μηκος ου καμνει και ταλαιπωρει, αλλα ποδες μεν προελθοντες πονουσι και εκλυονται, οφθαλμος δε οδευων τοσουτον μεν υψος, τοσουτον δε ευρος, ουδεμιας αισθανεται αρρωστιος.

† Theſe are, what We call, *The animal Spirits*; and it is generally ſuppoſed, that Senſation is cauſed, by the *undulatory* Motion of this nervous Fluid.—Though ſome imagine, it is performed by the *vibratory* Motion of the Nerves themſelves.—Others think, that neither of theſe Opinions will comport, with the Texture of thoſe fine Tubes, or with the Nature of the Fluid they contain.—It is, I believe, one of thoſe *Myſteries* in the material World, which may reconcile *thinking* and *unprejudiced* Minds, to the Myſteries of the *Chriſtian* Revelation. Why ſhould any One wonder, to find ſome Doctrines in the BIBLE, which ſurpaſs the Reach of human Underſtanding; when there are ſo many Operations in the Body, confeſſedly and abſolutely inexplicable by the moſt acute Anatomiſt?

Senſe to every Nerve, and communicate Motion to every Limb. Part flows downward; rolls the reeking Current through all the lower Quarters; and diſpenſes the nutrimental Stores, even to the meaneſt Member, and the minuteſt Veſſel.

Obſerve, how the ſtately *Thames*, and the rapid *Rhine*, refreſh the Foreſts and the Groves; water the Towns, which croud their Banks; and make the Meadows they interſect, laugh and ſing. So, only with an incomparably *richer* Fluid, and with infinitely *more numerous* Streams, this human River laves the ſeveral Regions of the Body. Transfuſing Vigour, and propagating Health, through the Whole.

But, how ſhall a Stream, divided into Myriads of Channels, and pervading innumerable Tracts, how ſhall this be brought back again to its Source? Should any Portion, like your *Lake-waters* after a Land-flood, deviate from their Courſe, or be unable to return—Putrefaction would take place—A Nuiſance would ariſe—Death might enſue. Therefore, the All-wiſe CREATOR has connected the Extremity of the Arteries, with the Beginning of the Veins. So that the ſame Force, which *darts* the crimſon Wave through the former, *drives* it through the latter. Thus it is reconducted, without the leaſt Extravaſation, to the great ſalient Ciſtern *.

There

* *Solomon* makes uſe of this Similitude—*Or ever the Pitcher be broken at the Fountain; or the Wheel broken at the Ciſtern.* The two *Ventricles* of the Heart, repleniſhed with Blood, are fitly repreſented by a *Ciſtern*; and the *contractile* Force of their Fibres, acts like the *Water-wheel* in Hydraulics.—The *Pitcher*, which receives the Water at the Spring-head, and conveys it away for the Owner's Service,

There played off afreſh, it renews and perpetuates the vital Functions.

Where two *oppoſite* Currents would be in Danger of claſhing, a fibrous Excreſcence interpoſes *; which, like a projecting Pier, breaks the Stroke of each, and throws both into their proper Receptacle. —When the Wafture is to be *ſpeedy*, the Channels either forbear to wind in their Courſe †, or to leſſen in their Dimenſions ‡. When the Progreſs is to be *retarded*, the Tubes are twined into various Convolutions ‖, or their Diameter is contracted into a narrower Size.—Modeled by theſe judicious Rules; guarded by theſe wiſe Precautions; the living Flood never diſcontinues its interchangeable Tide: but, Night and Day, whether We ſleep or wake, ſtill perſeveres to ſally* *briſkly* through the Arteries, and return *ſoftly* through the Veins.

Such aſtoniſhing Expedients are uſed, to concoct, digeſt, aſſimilate the Food! To convert it into Chyle—to blend it with the Blood—and to diſtribute both through the Body! By means of which, the animal Conſtitution is nouriſhed and maintained. In Youth, its Bulk is increaſed; in Age, its Decays are repaired; and it is kept in tenantable Condition for the Soul, during the Space of ſeventy or eighty Years.

Service, may probably ſignify the *Aorta*, and the *pulmonary* Artery; whoſe Functions correſpond with the Uſes of ſuch a Veſſel. *Eccleſ.* xii. 6.

* In the Point, where the Streams, from the *Vena cava* and *Vena aſcendens*, meet.

† In the great Artery, which deſcends to the Feet.

‡ In every Interval, between all the Ramifications.

‖ In the Veſſels, which carry the Blood to the Brain; which form the viſcous Secretions; and indeed which conſtitute all the Glands.

Theſe are a few, and but a *very few* Inſtances of that Contrivance, Regularity, and Beauty, which are obſervable in the human Frame. Attentive Enquirers diſcover *deeper* Footſteps of Deſign, and *more refined* Strokes of Skill. Diſcover them, not only in the grand and moſt diſtinguiſhed Parts, but in every Limb, and in every Organ: I may venture to add, in every Fibre that is extended, and in every Globule * that flows.

Aſp. How *various* is the Syſtem of the Body! Various, in the Subſtance, as well as in the Shape, of the ſeveral Parts! Yet all wrought of one and the *ſame* original Maſs!—Is it not ſtrange, that the very ſame Speck of Matter, ſhould ſpread itſelf into a Lining of Skin, and ſwell into Beds of Fleſh; ſhould be extended into tough Sinews, and hardened into ſtrong Bones; ſhould here be impenetrable as the ſolid Rock, there be tranſparent as the fineſt Gauſe †?—Is it not exceedingly ſtrange, that one and the ſame Scrap of ſimple uncompounded Materials, ſhould form the Columns and the Rafters; ſhould compoſe the Aqueducts and Reſervoirs; ſhould be ſufficient to execute both the Maſonry and the Joinery: in ſhort, to conſtitute the Shell, the Furniture, and all the Ornaments, of the completeſt Edifice in the World!

The

* The extreme *Minuteneſs* of the Globules, which form the *red* Part of our Blood, is one Exemplification of this Remark. If, as Mr. *Lewenhoeck* computes, every Globule be 25,000 times ſmaller, than the ſmalleſt Grain of Sand.

† *Rock, Gauſe*—This is particularly obſervable, in the Conſtruction of the *Teeth*, and the Compoſition of the *Gums*.

The Syſtem, I obſerve, though various, is *uniform*. Amidſt the greateſt Multiplicity of Parts, the moſt perfect Harmony ſubſiſts. No one hinders, but each aſſiſts, the Operation of another; and all conſpire to the Benefit and Preſervation of the Whole.—Moſt judiciouſly has the great Apoſtle touched this Subject! Moſt happily has He applied it, to illuſtrate the Reaſonableneſs, and enforce the Practice, both of *perſonal* and *ſocial* Duties, of private Content and public Concord.

The Body, He obſerves, *is not one Member, but many*. To each of which ſome peculiar and needful Office is aſſigned. So that the *Foot*, though placed in the loweſt Order, and deſtined to ſerve on the very Ground, has no Reaſon to reckon itſelf a worthleſs Outcaſt; or to ſay, *Becauſe I am not the Head, I am not of the Body* *. Neither has the *Head*, in its exalted Station, and amidſt its honourable Functions, any Cauſe to deſpiſe the inferior Limbs; or to ſay, with Contempt and Self-ſufficiency, *I have no Need of*

* 1 *Cor.* xii. 12, &c. There ſeems to be a *curious Exactneſs* in this Proſopopœia, not obſerved by *Aſpaſio*, but very juſtly remarked by St. *Chryſoſtom*. Ου ποιει τον ποδα τω οφθαλμω διαλεγομενον, αλλα τη ακοη τον οφθαλμον· επειδαν γαρ ου τοις ζφυδρα υπερεχωσιν, αλλα τοις ολιζον αναβεβηκοσι φθονειν πεφυκαμεν, δια τουτο και αυλος ειλω ποιειται την ζυκρισιν. The Apoſtle does not ſuppoſe the Foot remonſtrating againſt the Head. But the Foot is introduced, as lodging the Complaint againſt the Hand. While the Ear, a more noble Organ, exerciſes Emulation againſt the Eye. Each reſpecting a Part, which bears ſome Affinity or Reſemblance to itſelf. For We are not accuſtomed to envy Thoſe, who move in the moſt exalted Spheres, and far ſurpaſs Us; but Thoſe only, who are on a Level with Ourſelves, or but a ſmall Remove above Us. Therefore the ſacred Writer makes this judicious Aſſociation.

of You.—If there were no Feet, what would become of the locomotive Faculty? Or how could the Body convey itſelf from one Place to another? If there were no Hands, what ſhould we do for the Inſtruments of Action? Or how could the animal Frame be defended and accommodated?—Nay, the Parts, *which ſeem to be leſs honourable*, are neceſſary. Even thoſe, which form the Sediments, or throw off the Dregs, are of the laſt Importance to Life and its Comforts. Should thoſe be obſtructed in their Action, the moſt raging Torment enſues; ſhould the Obſtruction continue, Death is the inevitable Conſequence. By this wiſe Adjuſtment, *there is no Schiſm in the Body*; no ſeparate or interfering Ends are purſued by the Members; but the Safety and Support of each are the one undivided Care of all.

Thus ſhould it be among Men, and among Chriſtians; in the Civil Community, and in the Catholic Church. There is in both a *Subordination* of Perſons, but a *Concatenation* of Intereſts. For which Reaſon, a general Agreement ſhould take place, and a mutual Subſerviency to each other's Welfare. —The *Meaneſt* have no Cauſe to be diſſatisfied with their Condition; but to acquieſce in the unerring Diſpoſal of Providence, and chearfully contribute their Share to the common Good.—The *Higheſt* ſhould condeſcend to Men of low Eſtate; and maintain a Regard for the Well-being of the Pooreſt, as that which is intimately connected with their own. —In a Word; *each* ſhould feel a tender Concern for all; rejoicing in their Happineſs, and ſtudying to eſtabliſh it; ſympathizing with their Miſeries, and endeavouring to relieve them.

I am ſure, my *Theron* will be pleaſed with this fine Compariſon, uſed by the Apoſtle; and adapted to Purpoſes, at once ſo noble and ſo benevolent. Eſpecially, as it receives additional Propriety and Force from his own Obſervations.—But I have one more Enquiry to make.

Your Syſtem, though *organized*, though endued with a Principle of *Motion*, and furniſhed with the Powers of *Nutrition*, is ſtill deſtitute of *Senſe*.—The Creation abounds with Objects, fitted to yield the moſt refined Entertainment. The Sun impurples the Robe of Morning, and Stars beſpangle the Curtains of Night. Flowers of ſilver Whiteneſs, and of golden Luſtre, enamel the Ground. Fruits of all radiant Hues, and of every delicious Taſte, hang amiably dangling on the Boughs.

> ——————— *Airs alſo, vernal Airs,*
> *Breathing the Smell of Field and Grove, attune*
> *The trembling Leaves.*

But We hear of no Capacities, formed for the *Enjoyment* of theſe various Delights. Without which, the Breath of Fields muſt loſe its reviving Fragrance; the whiſpering Grove muſt degenerate into ſullen Silence; and Nature's Book of Knowledge, all fair and inſtructive, be no better than a vaſt unmeaning Blank.

Ther. Therefore, the great CREATOR, profuſely gracious to Mankind, has made Us a Preſent, an ineſtimable Preſent, of the *Senſes*. To be the Inlets of innumerable Pleaſures, and the Means of adminiſtering innumerable Advantages.

High

High in the Head, bright and conſpicuous as a Star in the Brow of Evening, is placed the *Eye*. In this elevated Situation, like a Centinel poſted in his Watch-tower, it commands the moſt enlarged Proſpect.—Conſiſting only of ſimple Fluids, incloſed in thin Tunicles, it conveys to our Apprehenſion all the Graces of blooming Nature, and all the Glories of the viſible Heavens.—How prodigiouſly wonderful! That an Image of the *hugeſt* Mountains, and a Tranſcript of the moſt *diverſified* Landſcapes, ſhall enter the ſmall Circlet of the Pupil!—How ſurpriſingly artful! That the Rays of Light, like an inimitable Pencil, ſhould paint on the optic Nerves; paint in an Inſtant of Time; paint in their *trueſt* Colours, and *exacteſt* Lineaments, every Species of external Objects!

The Eye is ſo tender, that a ſlight Accident, ſcarce perceivable by ſome other Parts of the Body, would be very injurious to its delicate Frame. It is guarded therefore with remarkable Circumſpection, and the moſt ſolicitous Care: with a Care, evidently proportioned to its nice Texture, and extenſive Uſefulneſs. It is *intrenched* deep in the Head; and *barricadoed*, on every Side, with a ſtrong Fortification of Bones.—As the Incurſion of the ſmalleſt Fly would incommode the poliſhed Surface, it is farther defended by two ſubſtantial *Curtains*, hung on a moſt ſlender cartilaginous Rod. Which ſecure it, not barely from Blows, and from any hurtful Attrition, but alſo from every troubleſome Annoyance. In Sleep, when there is no Occaſion to exerciſe the Senſe, but an abſolute Neceſſity to protect the Organ, theſe Curtains *ſpontaneouſly* cloſe. At any Time, they will *fly* together with a Motion, quick

as

as the Alarm of Fear, I had almoſt ſaid, quicker than Thought itſelf. At all Times, they are lined with an extremely fine Sponge *, wet with its own *native Dews*. Which lubricate the Eye-ball; oil, as it were, its Wheels; and fit it for a Courſe of unwearied Activity.—At the End of this ſkinny Mantelet (if I may uſe the military Style) is planted a Range of briſtly *Palliſadoes* †. Which keep out the leaſt Mote; ward off even the ſtraggling Atom; and moderate the otherwiſe too potent Impreſſions of the Sun-beams ‡.

The

* The *Glandula Lachrymalis* and its Ducts; opening on the inner Part of the Eye-lid, and ſecreting the Fluid, which *Theron* calls his Oil; becauſe, it irrigates the Eye-ball, and facilitates its Motion.

† The Hairs, which ariſe upon the Extremities of the Eye-laſh, grow only to a certain convenient Length, and never ſtand in need of cutting.—They are not flaccid and pendulous, like thoſe of the Head; but *ſtiff* and *prominent* like Briſtles. The firſt Sort would be troubleſome, the laſt is beneficial.—Add to this, that their Points ſtand out of the Way; that thoſe of the upper Eye-lid being bent upwards, and thoſe of the lower downwards.—So nicely attentive is PROVIDENCE, even to ſuch very ſmall Matters! Or rather, ſo gracious is our Almighty CREATOR, that He counts nothing ſmall, which ſtands connected with our Comfort and Advantage.

‡ The inceſſant, the more than fatherly Care, which the LORD GOD ALMIGHTY takes of his People, is repreſented in Scripture by this extraordinary Proviſion, made for the Security of the Eye. Which is one of the *fineſt* Images, that Fancy can form; and one of the moſt *conſolatory* Truths, that Faith can believe. *He kept Him as the Apple of his Eye*, Deut. xxxii. 10.—*He that toucheth You, toucheth the Apple of his Eye*, Zech. ii. 8.—The Reader will eaſily ſee, that the Compariſon, every Way beautiful, is carried to the *higheſt* Pitch of Energy and Beauty, by the ſacred Writers. Not barely the Eye, but the *Apple* or *Pupil* of the Eye; the tendereſt Part even of the moſt tender Member.

The *Brows* are a kind of natural *Pent-houſe*, thatched and arched with curious Wreaths of Hair. The Thatch lies as ſmooth, as the Linen that is neatly plaited, and newly ironed. It ſerves to divert the Sweat, from trickling into the Eyes, and offending them with its Brine. The *Arches* are ſo finely coloured, and ſo elegantly turned, that they ſet off the Whiteneſs of the Forehead, and beſtow additional Grace on the whole Countenance.—Becauſe, in our waking Hours, there is almoſt an inceſſant Call for thoſe little Orbs, they run upon the fineſt *Caſters*; rolling upwards or downwards, to the Right-hand or to the Left; with the utmoſt Speed, and with equal Eaſe. Which Circumſtance, added to the Flexibility of the Neck, renders our *two* Eyes as uſeful, as if the whole Body, like the living Creature in St. *John*'s Viſion, was *full of Eyes before and behind* *.

The *Ear* conſiſts of an outward Porch and inner Rooms, with Tools of the moſt admirable Contrivance and finiſhed Workmanſhip. The Contrivance and the Workmanſhip incomparably nicer, than the Deſigns of *Palladio*, or the Architecture of *Solomon*'s Temple; though the former were drawn from the magnificent Monuments of *Rome*, though the latter was built in the Taſte of *Heaven*. Yea; ſo conſummately nice is the Structure of this Organ, that GOD, the only wiſe GOD, is not aſhamed to be called its Artificer. *He that planted the Ear* †, is

* Rev. iv. 6.

† The Pſalmiſt uſes the Word *planted*, to deſcribe the Situation of the Ear; and the Word *formed*, to denote the Structure of the Eye. In both which Expreſſions, there ſeems to be the utmoſt Propriety and the greateſt

is to be found among the Titles of the exalted JEHOVAH.—In one very remarkable Peculiarity, this minute Fabric reſembles that ſacred Edifice, the Porch being loftier * than any other Part of the Building.

The *Porch*, I call that ſemicircular Lodge, which ſtands ſomewhat prominent from the Head; and is —not *ſoft* and *ſinking* as Fleſh, leſt it ſhould abſorb the Sound, rather than promote the Repercuſſion; not *hard* and *ſtubborn* as Bone, leſt it ſhould occaſion painful Inconveniencies, when We repoſe Ourſelves on either Side—but of a *cartilaginous* Subſtance, covered with a tight Expanſion of Skin, and wrought into irregular Bends and Hollows. Which, like circling Hills, or ſurrounding rocky Shores †, collect the wandering Undulations of the Air; and tranſmit them, with a vigorous Impulſe, to the finely ſtretched Membrane of the Tympanum ‡.—

The

Delicacy.—The Mechaniſm of the Ear, like a Root *planted* (נטע) in the Earth, is ſunk deep into the Head, and concealed from public View. Whereas, the Ball of the Eye, like ſome *finely-wrought* (עצר) Pilaſter on a Building, is prominent on the Face, and preſented to general Obſervation. *Pſal.* xciv. 9.

* Compare 1 *Kings* vi. 2. with 2 *Chron.* iii. 4.

† Alluding to thoſe expreſſive Lines, where *Echo* ſeems to live in the Sound, as well as in the Senſe:

——— *Vocemque incluſa volutant*
Littora, pulſati Colles Clamore reſultant. VIRG.

‡ So called, becauſe it reſembles a *Drum*, both in Figure and Uſe. Being a fine Skin, expanded upon a Circle of Bones, and over a poliſhed reverberating Cavity.—It is affected by the Vibrations of the external Air, as the Covering of the War-drum is by the Impreſſions of the Stick.—It is alſo furniſhed with *Braces*, which ſtrain or relax it at pleaſure; and accommodate its Tenſion either to loud or languid Sounds.

The *Avenue*, or narrow Entry, is ſecured from the inſinuating Attempts of Inſects, by a *Moraſs* (ſhall I ſay?) of bitter and viſcous Matter: diſguſtful to their Taſte, and embarraſſing to their Feet.—The *Hammer* and the *Anvil*; the *Stirrup* and the *Drum*; the winding Labyrinths *, and the ſounding Galleries; theſe, and other Pieces of Mechaniſm, all inſtrumental to the Power of Hearing, are beyond Deſcription curious.

Amazingly nice muſt be the Formation, and inconceivably exact the Tenſion of the auditory Nerves! Since they correſpond with the ſmalleſt Tremors of the Atmoſphere, and eaſily diſtinguiſh their moſt ſubtile Variations. With the gentle Gales that fan Us, or even with the ruder Blaſts that aſſault Us, theſe delicate Strings are but little affected. Whereas, they are perfect *Uniſons* with thoſe fine, thoſe *ſignificant* Agitations of the Air, which the acuteſt Touch is unable to diſcern. Theſe living Chords, tuned by an Almighty Hand, and diffuſed through the echoing Iſles, and ſonorous Cells—theſe receive the Impreſſions of Sound, and propagate them to the Brain. Theſe † give Exiſtence

* Of this Kind is the auditory Tube; intended to *ſoften* and *qualify* the ruſhing Sound. Leſt, if the Incurſion were direct, it might be too impetuous, and injure the delicate Expanſe of the Tympanum.—While this is deſigned to moderate, the Concavities of the inner Structure are prepared to *heighten* and *invigorate* the Sound, by calling in the auxiliary Force of an Echo.—Such Intentions, ſo *varying*, nay ſo *oppoſite*, concur to form this admirable Organ!

† Elegantly ſtyled, *The Daughters of Muſic*. For this Phraſe may refer, as well to the Organs which *diſtinguiſh*, as to thoſe which *form*, the harmonious Accents. *Eccleſ.* xii.

Exiſtence to the Charms of Muſic, and reciprocate the rational Entertainments of Diſcourſe. Theſe treat my *Aſpaſio* with the Melody of the Woodland Choirs, and afford *me* the ſuperior Pleaſure of my Friend's Converſation.

The Eye perceives only the Objects that are *before* it; whereas, the Ear warns Us of Tranſactions, that paſs above Us, behind Us, all around Us.—The Eye is uſeleſs, amidſt the Gloom of Night; and cannot carry its Obſervation, through the bolted Door, or the cloſed Window-ſhutter. But the Ear admits her Intelligence, through the *darkeſt* Medium, and the *minuteſt* Cranny.—The Eye is upon Duty, only in our waking Hours; but the Ear is always expanded, and always acceſſible *: a Courier, which never tires: a Centry, ever in his Box.—To ſecure a Reſource, in caſe any Misfortune ſhould diſable *one* of the hearing or ſeeing Organs, our all-gracious MAKER has given Us *Duplicates* of each.

As there are tremulous Concuſſions impreſſed upon the Air, diſcernable only by the Inſtruments of Hearing; there are alſo *odoriferous* Particles, wafted by the ſame aerial Vehicle, which are perceivable only by the *Smell*.—The Noſtrils are wide at the Bottom,

xii. 4.—Methinks, I am always deſirous to add any appoſite Expreſſion, or parallel Paſſage from the BIBLE. As I find, Writers of Taſte and Politeneſs are ſtudious to embelliſh their Works, with Quotations from the *Claſſics*. And I perſuade myſelf, the Reader will allow me to gratify this favourite Inclination. Becauſe, every Portion of that ineſtimable Book, however minute, is like the Filings of Gold, or the Sparks of a Diamond. Is ſure, when properly applied, to add *Worth*, and impart *Beauty*.

* *Auditus autem ſemper patet. Ejus enim Senſus etiam dormientes egemus. A quo, cum Sonus ejt acceptus, etiam e Somno excutimur.* De Nat. Deor.

that a large Quantity of Effluvia may enter, narrow at the Top, that, when entered, they may close their Ranks, and act with greater Vigour. Fine, beyond all Imagination, are the Steams which exhale from fetid or fragrant Bodies. The very best Microscopes, which discover *Thousands* and *Thousands* of Animalcules in a Drop of putrified Water, cannot bring *one* Individual, among all these evanescent Legions, to our Sight. They sail in numberless Squadrons, close to our Eyes, close by our Ears; yet are so amazingly attenuated, that they elude the Search of both. Nevertheless, so judiciously * are the *olfactory* Nets laid, and so artfully their

* The *Keenness* and *Sagacity* of this Sense, furnished the evangelical Prophet with a beautiful Metaphor, to display the *Accuracy* of the MESSIAH's Judgment in spiritual Things. *Isai.* xi. 3.

וְהֲרִיחוֹ implies his Faculty or Sense of *Smelling*; which Expression is accommodated to our Language, and properly enough translated, *Shall make Him of quick Understanding*. q. d. "He shall judge, not according to external Appearance, but according to the State of the "inner Man. Unfeigned Self-abasement, Affiance in a "REDEEMER's Righteousness, and Faith purifying "the Heart; these Endowments, though not observed, "or, if observed, not valued by the World, *these* shall "be the Test of his Approbation, and the Objects of "his Esteem. These constitute, what is called in the "next Words, *The Fear of the LORD*.

"In determining the Reality of these Qualities, He "shall be *unerringly* exact, and *infallibly* true. Let Hypocrisy put on every Mask, and practise all her Wiles, "they shall avail nothing before the ROOT and OFFSPRING of *David* (Ver. 1.). As those extremely "subtle Effluvia, which escape the Inquisition of every "other Sense, are easily and perfectly distinguished by "the *Smell*; so, those Recesses of the Breast, and those "Secrets of the Heart, which lie too deep for all hu-

"man

their Meſhes fixed, that they catch theſe vaniſhing Fugitives. They catch the roaming Perfumes, which fly off from the opening Honeyſuckle; and take in the ſtationed Sweets, which hover round the expanded Roſe. They imbibe all the balmy Fragrance of Spring, all the aromatic Exhalations of Autumn, and enable Us to banquet even on the *inviſible* Dainties of Nature.

Furniſhed as We are with theſe ſeveral Organs,

> ——————— *Not a* Breeze
> *Flies o'er the Meadow, not a* Cloud *imbibes*
> *The ſetting Sun's Effulgence, not a* Strain
> *From all the Tenants of the warbling Shade*
> *Aſcends, but whence our* Senſes *can partake*
> *Freſh Pleaſure* *.

Another Capacity for frequent Pleaſure, our bountiful CREATOR has beſtowed, in granting Us the Bowers of *Taſte*. By means of which, the Food that ſupports our Body, feaſts our Palate; firſt,

 treats

"nian Diſcernment; even they are naked and open, "are obvious and palpable, to *his* divinely ſagacious "Underſtanding."

* See that very elegant Poem, THE PLEASURES OF IMAGINATION, Book III.—'Tis true, I am no Proſelyte to the Author's Principles, either political or moral; to his *Republican* Adminiſtration, or his *Shafteſburian* Ethics. Much leſs can I admire that pompous and ſolemn Whim, of making *Ridicule the Teſt of Truth*. Which ſeems juſt as ſuitable to the Fitneſs of Things, as to place Harlequin in the Seat of Lord Chief Juſtice.—But if We look for the Glow of Imagination, and the Harmony of Numbers; Energy and Luſtre of Deſcription, with Correctneſs and Delicacy of Taſte; I know not any didactic Poem, which preſents Us with all theſe Graces in ſuch high Perfection.

treats Us with a pleaſing Regale; then, diſtributes its beneficial Recruits.—The Hone bedewed with Oil, whets the Razor into the utmoſt Keenneſs. The *Saliva*, flowing upon the Tongue, and moiſtening its Nerves, quickens them into the livelieſt Acts of Senſation.—This Senſe is circumſtanced, in a Manner peculiarly benign and wiſe; ſo as to be a ſtanding, though ſilent Plea for *Temperance*. Without recurring to the Vengeance of GOD, or the Terrors of eternal Judgment, it is a powerful Diſſuaſive from irregular and exceſſive Indulgencies. Becauſe, the Exerciſe of Sobriety, ſets the fineſt Edge on its Faculties; and adds the moſt *poignant* Reliſh to its Enjoyments. Whereas, Riot and Voluptuouſneſs *pall* the Appetite; blunt its Senſibility; and render the Gratifications extremely languid, if not perfectly inſipid.—The Sight, the Smell, the Taſte are, not only ſo many ſeparate Sources of Delight, but a joint Security to our Health. They are the *vigilant* and *accurate* Inſpectors, which examine our Food, and enquire into its Properties; whether it be pleaſant or diſagreeable; wholeſome or noxious. For the Diſcharge of this Office, they are excellently qualified, and moſt commodiouſly ſituate. So that nothing can gain Admiſſion through the Mouth, till it has undergone the Scrutiny, and obtained the Paſſport of them all.

To all theſe, as a moſt neceſſary and advantageous Supplement, is added the Senſe of *Feeling*. Which renders the whole Aſſemblage complete.—While other Senſes have a particular Place of Reſidence; this is diffuſed throughout *the whole* Body. In the Palms of the Hands, on the Tips of the Fingers,

and indeed through all the extreme Parts of the Flesh, it is most quick and lively: as the advanced Guards, or Scouts upon the Frontiers, are or ought to be peculiarly attentive and wakeful.—Scouts did I say? The whole Army of *Xerxes*, drawn out in Battle array, with his *Millions* of supernumerary Attendants *, were but like a few *Gleaners* straggling in the Field; if compared, either in Number or Order, with those nervous Detachments, which pervade the Texture of the Skin, and minister to the Act of Feeling.—How happily is this Sense tempered between the two Extremes! Neither so *acute*, as the Membranes of the Eye; nor so *obtuse*, as the Callus of the Heel. The former would expose Us to continual Pain; render our Clothes galling, and the very Down oppressive. The latter would quite benumb the Body, and almost annihilate the Touch. —Nor this alone, but *all* the Senses are most exactly adapted to their respective Offices, and to the several Exigencies of our present State. Were they *strained* to a much higher Tone, they would be Avenues of Anguish. Were they *relaxed* into greater Insensibility, they would be so many useless Incumbrances.

Say, what the Use, were finer Senses given,
T' inspect a Mite, not comprehend the Heav'n?
The Touch if tremblingly alive all o'er,
To smart and agonize at every Pore?

* The Soldiers and Attendants of *Xerxes*, amounted to five Millions two hundred and eighty Thousand. Another Army, so large and numerous, occurs not in all the Records of History.

Vid. HERODOT. Lib. VII.

Or quick Effluvia darting through the Brain,
Die of a Rose in aromatic Pain *?

Asp. How admirable and gracious is this Provision, which the bleſſed GOD has made, to accommodate Us with delightful Senſations, and inſtructive Ideas!—The Taſte, the Touch, and the Smell, are ſomewhat *ſtraitened* in the Extent of their Operations. The Ear carries on a Correſpondence with a *larger* Circle of Objects. But the Sight moſt amply ſupplies, whatever is wanting in all the other Senſes. The Sight ſpreads itſelf to an *infinite* Multitude of Bodies; and brings within our Notice ſome of the *remoteſt* Parts of the Univerſe.—The Taſte, the Touch, the Smell, perceive nothing but what is brought to their very Doors. Whereas, the Eye extends its Obſervation, as far as the Orbit of *Saturn*; nay glances, and in an Inſtant of Time, to the inconceivable Diſtance of the Stars. The Compaſs of the Earth, together with the Immenſity of the Skies, are its unlimited Range.

From this remarkable Variety, with regard to the *Sphere* and *Activity*, the Acuteneſs and Vivacity of the Senſes, St. *Paul* forms one of the fineſt, boldeſt, and moſt important Compariſons in the World. By this He illuſtrates the Difference between the Wiſdom, which is derived from the Word of divine Revelation; and the Wiſdom, which is acquired by Dint of human Application.—In his Oration to the *Athenians*, ſpeaking of their moſt celebrated Sages, He ſays; *If ſo be, they might* feel after, *and find HIM* †. In his Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*,

* Eth. Epiſt. I.

† *Acts* xvii. 27. Ει αρα γε ψηλαφησειαν αυτον.

brews, ſpeaking of the Man *Moſes*, our Author obſerves; That *He endured as* ſeeing *Him who is inviſible* *. Writing to his *Corinthian* Converts, He adds, as a farther Heightening of the Contraſt; *We all* beholding *with open Face the Glory of the* LORD †. —The Knowledge of the *Philoſopher*, is like that obſcure and ſcanty Information, which is but difficultly obtained by groping with the Hand, in the Gloom of a dark Night. The Knowledge of the *Chriſtian*, is like that copious Influx of clear and enlarged Ideas, which We receive by the Mediation of the Eye, amidſt the Shining of a bright Day.

Tully, We find, has, in the Book before us, hit upon ſome of the moſt general and obvious Uſes, to which the ſeveral Parts of the human Body are adapted. Yet how *ſuperficial* and *deficient* appears his Penetration, when We take in the much deeper Diſcoveries, and the much higher Improvements of our modern Anatomy! Thus, and abundantly more defective, is his Knowledge of moral Duties and divine Doctrines; when compared with what is taught Us, in the *plain* Sermon on the Mount, and the unſtudied Epiſtles of the *Jewiſh* Tent-maker.

Therefore, though I would bleſs the beneficent GOD, for the Miniſtration of all the Senſes, and particularly for the noble Organs of Viſion: I would be more eſpecially thankful for that Light of the World, *CHRIST JESUS* and his glorious Goſpel; as well as for that *ſpiritual Eye*, by which the One is underſtood, and the Other ſeen — a *lively Faith*. I would alſo long for that Place of beatific Enjoyment, where our Views of the adorable GOD-

* Heb. xi. 27. † 2 Cor. iii. 18.

HEAD, and our Acquaintance with the ſublimeſt Truths, will as much tranſcend all our preſent Apprehenſions, as the moſt enlightened *Saint* exceeds the benighted *Gentile*.

Ther. The crowning Gift, that which improves—But why am I ſo prolix? Why ſhould I reſume a Subject, already ſpun out to a Degree of Tediouſneſs? Why weary my *Aſpaſio*, and put his Attention to Penance?

Aſp. Dear *Theron*, why do You talk in this Manner? How can You admit ſuch a Suſpicion? How can You offer to drop your Narrative, juſt at this intereſting Point? Weary! No; I am almoſt inclined to ſpeak, what perhaps your Modeſty will diſlike to hear ſpeak—

Ther. Enough. Forbear. I proceed — That which improves the Satisfaction, and augments the beneficial Effects, accruing from all the Senſes, is *Speech*.—Speech makes me a Gainer, from the Eyes and Ears of other People; from the Ideas they conceive, and the Obſervations they make. What an admirable Inſtrument, for articulating the Voice, and modifying it into Speech, is the *Tongue!*—The Tongue has neither Bone nor Joint; yet faſhions itſelf, with the utmoſt Volubility, into every Shape and every Poſture, which can expreſs Sentiment, or conſtitute Harmony. This little Collection of muſcular Fibres, under the conducting Skill of the CREATOR, is the Artificer of our Words *.

By

* I am ſenſible, that the *Glottis* has a conſiderable Share, in modulating the Sound, and forming the Voice. But, as the Nature and Office of this moſt *curious Aperture*, are very little known by the Generality of People;

We

By this We communicate the *Secrets* of the Breaſt, and make our very *Thoughts* audible. By this We inſtruct the Ignorant, and comfort the Diſtreſſed; We glorify GOD, and edify each Other *; the Academic explains the abſtruſeſt Sciences, and the Eccleſiaſtic preaches the everlaſting Goſpel.

Who would not bleſs, for this, the Gift of Speech?
And in the Tongue's Beneficence be rich?

This is likewiſe the Efficient of *Muſic*. It is ſoft as the Lyre, or ſhrill as the Trumpet; it can warble as the Lute, or reſound like the Organ. Connecting the Sweetneſs of its Melody, with the Solemnities of Devotion, We tune the ſpiritual Song, and raiſe the ſacred Anthem. We ſooth the Cares, and beguile the Toils of Life: We imitate the Angelic Choirs, and anticipate, in ſome Degree, their celeſtial Joys.—As the Tongue requires full Scope, and an eaſy Play, it is lodged in an ample Cavity; and ſurrounded with Reſervoirs of Spittle, always ready to diſtil the lubricating Dews. It moves under a concave Roof, which ſerves as a *Sounding-board*

We chooſe to follow the popular Opinion, ſo neatly deſcribed by the Poet,

——————— *Dædala Lingua,*
Linguæ figuratrix Verborum, Opifexque Loquelæ.
Anti-Lucret.

* The articulating Tongue is called *Our Glory*, Pſal. lvii. 8. And ſuch indeed it is, when devoted to *theſe* Purpoſes. It is then a Diſtinction, not only of Man from the brutal Herd, but of the Righteous from the Congregation of the Ungodly. It is then like *choice Silver*, or as *a Tree of Life*.

board to the Voice; giving it much the ſame additional Vigour and Grace, as the Shell of a Violin adds to the Language of the Strings.

Wiſe—wonderfully wiſe, and eminently gracious, is the Regulation both of *ſpontaneous* and *involuntary* Motion. Was this Regulation reverſed, what deplorable Inconveniencies would take place; nay, what unavoidable Ruin muſt enſue!—*Deplorable Inconveniencies*; if the Diſcharges of the Bowels, or Evacuations of the Bladder, were quite independent on our Leave. *Unavoidable Ruin*; if the Action of the Heart, required the Co-operation of our Thoughts; or the Buſineſs of Reſpiration, waited for the Concurrence of our Will.

The Will, in ſome Caſes, has not ſo much as a ſingle Vote. In others, She *determines* and *commands*, like an abſolute Sovereign; nor is there a Monarch upon Earth ſo punctually obeyed, as this Queen of the human Syſtem. If She but intimate her Pleaſure, the Spirits run, they fly, to execute her Orders; to ſtretch the Arm, or cloſe the Hand; to furrow the Brow with Frowns, or dimple the Cheek with Smiles.—How *eaſily*, as well as *punctually*, are theſe Orders carried into Execution! To turn the Screw, or work the Lever, is laborious and weariſome. But We move the Vertebræ, with all their appendent Chambers; We advance the Leg, with the whole incumbent Body; We riſe from our Seat; We ſpring from the Ground; and, though much Force is exerted, though a very conſiderable Weight is raiſed, We meet with no Difficulty, We complain of no Fatigue.

That all this ſhould be effected, without any Toil, and by a *bare Act* of the Will, is very ſurpriſing. But that

that the various Motions ſhould be made, renewed, continued, even while We remain *entirely* ignorant of the *Manner*, in which they are performed, this is ſtill more aſtoniſhing.—Who can play ſo much as a *ſingle* Tune upon the Spinnet, without learning the Difference of the Keys, or ſtudying the Rudiments of Muſic? Impoſſible! Yet the Mind of Man touches *every* Spring of the human Machine, with the moſt maſterly Skill; though She knows nothing at all, concerning the Nature of her Implements, or the Proceſs of her Operations.—We walk, We run, We leap; We throw Ourſelves into a Variety of Poſtures, and go through a Multitude of Exerciſes; yet are utterly unable to ſay, Which Nerve ſhould be active; which Muſcle ſhould ſwell; or which Tendon approximate, in order to produce any one of theſe Effects.

Put a *German* Flute into the Hand even of a ſenſible Perſon: without a Maſter to inſtruct Him, He is at a Loſs to make the Inſtrument ſpeak: much leſs is He able to ſink and ſoften the Sound, to exalt and extend the Note juſt as He pleaſes.—Yet We are ſelf-taught in the Method of *forming*, *regulating*, and *varying* the Voice. Naturally, and with unpremeditated Fluency, We give it the languiſhing Cadence of Sorrow, or the ſprightly Airs of Joy; the low faultering Accents of Fear, or the elevated Tone and rapid Sallies of Anger.

The Eye of a Ruſtic, who has no Notion of Optics, or any of its Laws, ſhall *lengthen* and *ſhorten* its Axis; *dilate* and *contract* its Pupil, without the leaſt Heſitation, and with the utmoſt Propriety: adapting itſelf, even with mathematical Exactneſs, to the particular Diſtance of Objects, and the different De-

grees of Light. By which Means, it performs ſome of the moſt curious Experiments in the improved *Newtonian* Philoſophy, without the leaſt Knowledge of the Science, or ſo much as any Conſciouſneſs of of its own Dexterity.

I can never ſufficiently admire this Multiplicity of animated Organs; their finiſhed Form; their faultleſs Order; and the exquiſite Regulation of all their Movements. Yet I muſt confeſs myſelf ſtruck with greater Admiration at the Power, the *truly myſterious* Power and Sway, which the Soul exerciſes over the Whole. Ten thouſand Reins are put into her Hand. She is not acquainted with their Office, their Uſe, or their Name. She has not learnt ſo much as to diſtinguiſh one from another. Nevertheleſs, ſhe manages all, conducts all, without the leaſt Perplexity or the leaſt Irregularity: nay, with a Promptitude, a Conſiſtency, and a Speed, which nothing elſe can equal!

Upon the Whole—Great Reaſon had *Euripides* to call the human Body,

Σωμα τεκτονος καλον ποικιλμα.

I believe, the preceding Obſervations will juſtify us, if we give a fuller Meaning to the Poet, and tranſlate his Words—*The inimitably fine Workmanſhip, of a great, ſupreme, unerring ARTIST.* Or, as *Virgil* ſpeaks, with a Pertinency and a Spirit, which epitomizes all I have ſaid, and expreſſes all I would ſay; This bodily Structure is indeed—*Non enarrabile Textum* *.

Aſp.

* That is, A Structure, not barely correct, or highly finiſhed, but (as *Theron* has elſewhere expreſſed it) *beyond Deſcription curious.*

Asp. *Wonderfully*, I perceive, *and fearfully are we made* *!—Made of ſuch complicated Parts; each ſo correctly faſhioned, and all ſo exactly arranged †; every one executing ſuch curious Functions, and many of them operating in ſo myſterious a Manner; as may juſtly render Us *a Wonder to Ourſelves.*—Since Health depends upon ſo many minute Requiſites; upon ſuch a numerous Aſſemblage of moving Organs, ſince a ſingle Secretion ſtopped, may deſtroy the ſalutary Temperature of the Fluids; or a ſingle Wheel clogged, may put an End to the vital Motion of the Solids: with what holy *Fear*, *ſhould We paſs the Time of our Sojourning Here below* ‡! Truſting, for continual Preſervation, not merely on our own Care; not merely on alimentary Recruits; but on that Omnipotent Hand, which formed the admirable Machine. That the ſame Hand, which prepared the Pullies, and hung on the Weights, may daily wind up the Wheels. May never ceaſe to ſuperintend their Agency, and ſupport our Being ‖.

When

* Pſal. cxxxix. 14.

† St. *Paul*'s Language on the Subject is exceedingly beautiful and expreſſive, Συναρμολογουμενον και Συμβιβαζομενον. *Eph.* iv. 16. The ſeveral Parts moſt nicely *adapted* to each other, and moſt perfectly *harmonizing* with the Whole. All *aſſociated* with that Propriety, and *connected* with that Firmneſs, which are the very Foundation of Symmetry, Vigour, and Agility.—*Both* the Images uſed by the Apoſtle are comprehended in *one Hebrew* Word, כּוּן *aptavit, ſtabilivit.* Job xxxi. 15.

‡ 1 Pet. i. 17.

‖ Agreeably to that philoſophical Maxim, *Creatio & Conſervatio eadem eſt Actio:* and to thoſe ſcriptural Acknowledgments, It is GOD, *who holdeth our Soul in Life; He is the Length of our Days; his Viſitation preſerveth our Spirit.*

When We conſider the extenſive Contrivance, and delicate Mechaniſm—What Plans of Geometry *, have been laid; what Operations † of Chemiſtry, are performed; in a Word, what Miracles of Art and Elegance are executed; in order to furniſh Us with the neceſſary Recruits, and the ſeveral Delights of Life—Is there not abundant Reaſon to cry out, with the ſame inſpired Writer; "*How* "*dear are thy Counſels unto me, O GOD!* Thy "Counſels of creating Wiſdom! Thou haſt not "been ſparing, but even laviſh of thy artificial "and elaborate Deſigns. Thou haſt omitted no "Expedient, which might eſtabliſh my Eaſe; en-"large my Comfort; and promote, yea complete "my bodily Happineſs!" And is not this a moſt endearing Obligation, *to preſent our Bodies a living Sacrifice, holy and acceptable to GOD* ‡?

Should We not, every One, acknowledge with *David? Thy Hands have made me, and faſhioned me*—pray with *David? O give me* ſpiritual *Underſtanding* and godly Zeal—and reſolve with *David? that I may learn and keep thy Commandments* ‖? "What "Thou, LORD, haſt, with ſo much Curioſity "contrived, with ſo much Accuracy framed, and "with

* In the Muſcles alone, ſays Mr. RAY, there ſeems to be more Geometry, than in all the artificial Engines in the World.

† *Plans, Operations.*—*Job*, ſpeaking of the human Structure, uſes a Word expreſſive of both theſe Ideas. *Thy Hands have* made *me*, ſays our Tranſlation. But the Original עצבוני ſignifies abundantly more. It is applied to Artificers, who undertake ſome curious and elaborate Work; which coſts them much *Study*, and great *Pains*. Much Study, to plan; and great Pains, to execute. *Job* x. 8.

‡ Rom. xii. 1. ‖ Pſal. cxix. 73.

"with so much Liberality adorned, I would fain "devote to thy Glory. Never, O! never let me "debase to the Drudgery of Satan, nor prostitute "to the Slavery of my Lusts, those Members and "those Faculties, on which Thou hast bestowed "so much divine Cost and heavenly Skill. Let "them all *be Servants of Righteousness*, and Instru-"ments of Holiness. Let them all be *Vessels of "Honour*, sanctified and * meet for their indulgent "CREATOR's Service. That I may glorify "the great AUTHOR of Existence, *with my "Body and with my Spirit, which are*, as to Work-"manship, Property, and Redemption, wholly "*his*."

Ther. *With my Spirit*—Ay; what is this Mansion of Flesh, though so exquisitely wrought, compared with that sublime and immortal Inhabitant, which resides within!

—*That intellectual Being*;

Those Thoughts, which wander through Eternity ‡!

This Consideration inclines me to think, that, if the *Casket* be so highly polished, the *Jewel* cannot be so excessively coarse, as my *Aspasio*'s Doctrine of original Corruption supposes.

Asp. I perceive your Aim, *Theron*. But must beg leave, at present, to decline all Overtures for a Dispute. If my Arguments have failed, your Description has answered its End.—I cannot suffer my Thoughts to be diverted from a Subject, which is so very engaging, yet so rarely discussed. I have such

2

* 2 Tim. ii. 21. † 1 Cor. vi. 20.

‡ MILTON.

a ſtrong Deſire to recollect and retain what has been obſerved, that even *your* Converſation will, at this Juncture, loſe its Reliſh. Here therefore I put a Period to our Diſcourſe, and muſt break away from your Company, in order to ruminate and digeſt my Notions, in ſome ſequeſtred lonely Walk. Unleſs You will permit me, before I retire, to make one Remark.—And let it not ſtartle my Friend, if I venture to ſay, That, amidſt all his curious Obſervations, He has forgot the principal Circumſtance of *Honour* and *Excellence*, which dignifies the human Body.

Ther. I have omited many fine and admirable Properties, I confeſs. But ſure I have not forgot the *principal* and moſt diſtinguiſhing.

Aſp. You need not be diſpleaſed with Yourſelf. It argues no Defect in your Diſſertation. The Circumſtance I have in my View, could never be diſcovered, by following the Diſſecting-knife. It is learnt, not from *Cheſelden*'s Draughts, or the Tables of *Albinus*; but from the Word of Revelation. What I mean, is This—The human Body was exalted to a moſt intimate and *perſonal Union*, with the eternal SON of GOD. He who decorated the Heaven with Stars, and crowned the Stars with Luſtre; *HE vouchſafed to be made Fleſh* *, *and was found in Faſhion as a Man* †.—Nay, this is, even *now*, the Apparel of that majeſtic and adorable PERSON. He is clothed with our Nature; He wears our very Limbs; and appears in the Dreſs of Humanity, even at the Right-hand of GOD, and at the Head of all the heavenly Hoſts.

What

* John i. 14. † Phil. ii. 8.

What think You of another Privilege, mentioned by the Apoſtle? *Your Bodies are the Temple of the HOLY GHOST* *. Not your Souls only, but your very Bodies, are the Shrine, in which *the High and Holy ONE, that inhabiteth Eternity*, condeſcends to dwell. HE, who ſtreteh between the Cherubim, and walketh in the Circuit of the Skies, is pleaſed to ſanctify theſe earthly Tenements, and to chooſe them for his own Habitation. Is not this a *much grander* Embelliſhment, than all their matchleſs Contrivance and maſterly Workmanſhip? Juſt as the *Rod* which budded, and the *Manna* which was miraculouſly preſerved; the ſacred *Oracle* of *Urim* and *Thummim*; with the *Cloud* of Glory covering the Mercy-ſeat; were a much more eminent Diſtinction to *Solomon's* Temple, than the moſt lightened Beauties of Architecture.

Nor muſt I omit the Dignity — the tranſcendent and amazing Dignity — which is reſerved for theſe Syſtems of Fleſh, at the *Reſurrection* of the Juſt. They will then be refined and improved, into the moſt perfect State, and the moſt beauteous Form. Surpaſſing whatever is reſplendent and amiable in the moſt ornamental Appearances of material Nature. They will be purer than the unſpotted Firmament; brighter than the moſt brilliant Stars; and, which exceeds all Parallel, which comprehends all Perfection, they will *be made like unto CHRIST's glorious Body* †. Like that incomparably glorious Body, which the bleſſed *JESUS*

 wears

* 1 Cor. vi. 19. † Phil. iii. 21.

wears, in his celeſtial Kingdom, and on his triumphant Throne *.

When We add all theſe *magnificent Prerogatives*, which are revealed in Scripture, to all thoſe *inimitable Niceties*, which are diſplayed by Anatomiſts, what Thankfulneſs, what Admiration, can equal ſuch a Profuſion of Favours?

When all thy Mercies, O my GOD,
My riſing Soul ſurveys,
Tranſported with the View I'm loſt
In Wonder, Love, and Praiſe!

* This is a Circumſtance, rather inexpreſſibly marvellous. Let the Chriſtian, who, like the Writer of this Note, languiſhes under a ſickly Conſtitution, think upon it with peculiar Attention, and with peculiar Pleaſure.—The Body of *CHRIST* is, if I miſtake not, the nobleſt and moſt finiſhed Part of the material Creation.—To have formed it in the Womb of the Virgin, is, perhaps, the ſtrongeſt Proof of the Omnipotence and Divinity of the bleſſed SPIRIT.—This Body ſtands, as the Firſt-born in the Family of GOD, poſſeſſing the Excellency of Dignity and the Excellency of Power.—In the Mount of Tranſfiguration, it "ſhone like the Sun." To *Saul*, in his Journey towards *Damaſcus*, it ſhone "above the Bright-"neſs of the Sun." And who can tell how illuſtriouſly it will ſhine; when the Man *CHRIST JESUS* comes in the Clouds of Heaven, and takes his Seat on the great Tribunal?—But this We can tell; of this We are ſure; that theſe Bodies of ours; though now (*σωμα της ταπεινωσεως*, Phil. iii. 21.) enfeebled by Sickneſs, polluted by Sin, and ſoon to be degraded in the Duſt; that theſe very Bodies will, at our REDEEMER's Appearing, be exalted to the ſame State of Purity and Perfection, the ſame Life of Immortality and Glory, with his own.—Bleſſed be GOD for this delightful Hope! No Reſtorative ſo efficacious. No Cordial ſo ſovereign.

DIA-

DIALOGUE XIII.

THE Morning had been wet. At Noon the Rain ceaſed. But the Heavens ſtill continued gloomy.—Towards Evening, a gentle eaſtern Gale ſprung up; which diſſipated the dead Calm, and cleared the Face of the Sky.—The Sun, which had been muffled in Clouds, dropped the Veil. Diſengaged from the duſky Shroud, He ſhone forth with *peculiar Splendor*. His Beams, endeared by their late Suſpenſion, were doubly welcome, and produced unuſual Gaiety.

At this Juncture, *Theron* and *Aſpaſio* walked abroad. They walked alternately on the Terraces; one of which was oppoſite to the Country, the other contiguous to the Parterre.—Where the Gales, impregnated with the *freſheſt* Exhalations of Nature, breathed the Smell of Meads, and Fields, and Groves.—Or elſe, ſhaking the Cluſters of Roſes, and ſweeping the Beds of Fragrance, they flung *Balm* and *Odours* through the Air.

At a Diſtance, were heard the Bleatings of the Flock, mingled with the Lowings of the milky Mothers. While more melodious Muſic, warbled from the neighbouring Boughs, and ſpoke aloud the Joy of their feathered Inhabitants.—And not only ſpoke their Joy, but ſpread an *additional* Charm over all the Landſcape. For, amidſt ſuch Strains of native Harmony, the breathing Perfumes ſmell more ſweet; the ſtreaming Rills ſhine more clear; and the univerſal Proſpect looks more gay.

Then was experienced, what *Milton* ſo delicately deſcribes;

As when, from Mountain-tops the duſky Clouds
Aſcending, while the North Wind ſleeps, o'erſpread
Heav'n's chearful Face, the lowring Element
Scowls o'er the darken'd Landſcape Snow or Show'r:
If chance the radiant Sun with farewel Sweet
Extend his Evening Beam, the Fields revive,
The Birds their Notes renew, and bleating Herds
Attеſt their Joy, that Hill and Valley rings.

With Wonder and Delight our Friends obſerved, both the exquiſite Beauty, and the immenſe Magnificence of Things.—They were ſtruck with the moſt profound Veneration of that Almighty MAJESTY; who hung the Sun in Vaults of Azure, and clothed his Orb with Robes of Luſtre. Whoſe *Right-hand ſpanneth the Heavens* *, *and ſtretcheth them out as a Tent*, for innumerable Creatures, Worlds, Syſtems *to dwell in* †.—Charmed they were, at the Conſideration of the CREATOR's boundleſs Beneficence. Who lifts up the Light of his Countenance,

* Iſai. xlviii. 13. † Iſai. xl. 22.

nance, and Joy is ſhed; who opens his munificent Hand, and Plenty is poured, throughout all the Regions of the Univerſe. Inſomuch, that even inanimate Beings ſeem to ſmile under a Senſe of the Bleſſings: and though they find not a Tongue to praiſe, yet ſpeak their Acclamations by their *gladdened* Looks.

Ther. How very different, *Aſpaſio*, is this delightful Appearance of Things, from your ill-favoured Doctrine of original Guilt, and original Depravity! Your Doctrine is a Contradiction to the Language of Nature. Nature ſays, through all her Works, "That GOD is *good*, and Men are made to be "*happy*." Whereas, your Opinion would turn the whole World into a vaſt Hoſpital, and make every individual Perſon, a *Leper* or a *Lazarus*.

Aſp. I join with my *Theron*, and with univerſal Nature, in bearing witneſs to the Goodneſs of our GOD. And nothing, I am perſuaded, diſplays it more, nothing manifeſts ſo much, as the Doctrine of our *Fall* in *Adam*, connected with our *Recovery* in *CHRIST*.—Only in one Particular I am obliged to diſſent. It is not my Opinion that *would make*, but the Sin of our Forefather which *has made*, the whole World an Infirmary, and every individual Perſon a Leper.

Ther. At this Rate, You would croud into that *ſingle* Act of Diſobedience, Evils more numerous, and more fatal, than the Plagues which were lodged in *Pandora*'s Box, or the Troops which were ſtowed in the *Trojan* Horſe.

Aſp. Far more numerous, and infinitely more pernicious.—The Fable of *Pandora*'s Box ſeems to

have been a Shred of the Doctrine, picked up by the Heathen Wits, and fashioned according to their sportive Fancy. This would, if there was any Occasion for such weak Assistance, bring in the *Pagan* Theology, as a subsidiary Evidence to our Cause. —The *Trojan* Horse poured Ruin upon a single City; but the primitive Transgression entailed Misery upon all Generations.

Ther. You have advanced this heavy Charge pretty strenuously, I must confess. But without descending to Facts, or appealing to Experience. All the Invectives are *general* and *declamatory*, none pointing and particular.

Asp. It is easy, my dear Friend, too easy to draw up a particular Bill of Indictment; and not only to *specify* the Facts, but to *demonstrate* the Charge. Experience, sad Experience will furnish Us with a Cloud of Witnesses, and prove my Remonstrances to be more than Invectives.

Were we to dissect human Nature, as, in our last Conference, You treated the animal System, we should find the Leprosy of Corruption, spreading itself through our whole Frame. For which Reason, it is styled, by an inspired Writer, "The Old "Man *."—*Old*; because, in its Commencement, it was early as the Fall; and, in its Communication to Individuals, is coeval with their Being.—*Man*; because it has tainted the Body, infected the Soul, and disordered the whole Person.

St. *Paul*, describing a profligate Conversation, speaks in this remarkable Manner; *fulfilling the Desires of the Flesh, and of the Mind* †. By the Desires of the Flesh, He means those irregular Inclinations, which

* Rom. vi. 6. † Eph. ii. 3.

which correſpond with the *animal* Part of our Conſtitution. By the Deſires of the Mind, He denotes thoſe evil Propenſities, which are more immediately ſeated in the *intellectual* Faculties. And by both, He very ſtrongly expreſſes the *total* Depravation of our Nature.

Ther. What You call evil Propenſities, I am apt to think, are not really ſinful, but appointed for the *Tryal* of our Virtue.—Nay, ſince they are confeſſedly *natural*, they cannot be in themſelves evil. Becauſe, upon this Suppoſition, GOD, who is the Author of our Nature, would be the Author alſo of our Sin.

Aſp. Then You imagine, that Propenſities to Evil, are void of Guilt. This is the *Popiſh* Notion; but neither the *Moſaic* nor the *Apoſtolic* Doctrine.—In the Law of *Moſes* it is written, *Thou ſhalt not covet* *. The Divine LEGISLATOR prohibits, not only the iniquitous Practice, but the evil Deſire.—The Apoſtle gives it in charge to the *Coloſſians*, *Mortify your Members, which are upon the Earth; Fornication, Uncleanneſs, inordinate Affection, and*, which is the Source of all, *evil Concupiſcence* †. Now, muſt not *that* be ſinful, which is contrary to GOD's holy Nature, and a Tranſgreſſion of his holy Law? Can *that* be free from Guilt, which We are commanded to mortify? Which, if not mortified, denominates Us Children of Diſobedience, and ſubjects Us to the Wrath ‡ of GOD?

Though theſe Propenſities are confeſſedly natural, they may be evil notwithſtanding. The ſacred Writers repreſent what is natural, as contrary to what is ſpiritual. Inſtead of commending it, as

* Exod. xx. 17. † Col. iii. 5. ‡ Col. iii. 6.

innocent; they condemn it, as *fooliſh* *, *baſe* †, and *criminal* ‡.—Neither does this make the AUTHOR of our Nature, the Author of our Sin. But it proves, that our Nature has ſuſtained a deſtructive Blaſt: that it is quite different from its original State: that, what is ſpoken of the *Iſraelitiſh* People, is applicable to the *human* Race; *I planted Thee a noble Vine, wholly a right Seed: how then art Thou turned into the degenerate Plant of a ſtrange Vine* ‖?

However, let Us obſerve your Propoſal: dwell no longer on general Hints, but deſcend to a particular Examination. As our Examination will chiefly reſpect the Soul, let me enquire, What are her principal Faculties?

Ther. The *Underſtanding*, the *Will*, and the *Affections*. Theſe are the moſt diſtinguiſhing Powers, which that Queen of the human Oeconomy retains in her Service.—Theſe, like the ſeveral Diſtributions of ſome ample River, run through the whole Man; to quicken, fertilize, and enrich all his Converſation.—But You repreſent them bitter, as the Waters of *Marah*; unwholeſome, as the Streams of *Jericho*; noxious, as the Pottage prepared for the Sons of the Prophets.

Aſp. Nor is this a Miſrepreſentation. For, ſuch they really are; till divine Grace, like *Moſes's* Wood §, like *Eliſha's* Salt ⸸, or the Meal ** caſt in by that holy Man of GOD, *ſweeten* them, *heal* them, and render their Operations *ſalutary*.

The Underſtanding claims our firſt Regard.—This, however qualified to ſerve the Purpoſes of civil

* 1 Cor. ii. 14. † 2 Pet. ii. 12. ‡ Eph. ii. 3.
‖ Jer. ii. 21. § Exod. xv. 25. ⸸ 2 Kings ii. 21, 22. ** 2 Kings iv. 41.

vil Life, is unable to diſcover the Truths, in which *Wiſdom* conſiſts; or to form the Tempers, from which *Happineſs* flows.

Let Us take our Specimen, not from the uncultivated Savages of *Afric*, but from the politeſt Nation in *Europe*.—The *Grecians* piqued themſelves on their intellectual Accompliſhments. They termed all the reſt of Mankind *Barbarians*. Yet, even theſe Sons of Science, *profeſſing themſelves wiſe, were*, in Fact, egregious *Fools* *.—Not to enumerate the ſhocking Immoralities, which the Poets aſcribed to their Deities. Not to inſiſt upon the groſs Idolatries, which the common People practiſed in their Worſhip. Even their *Philoſophers*, the moſt improved and penetrating Geniuſes, were unacquainted with the very *firſt Principle* † of true Religion. Even they could not pronounce, with an unfaultering Tongue ‡, "That GOD is ONE."

Ther.

* Rom. i. 22.

† *The firſt of all the Commandments is, Hear, O Iſrael, The LORD our GOD is* ONE *LORD; and Thou ſhalt love the LORD*, &c. *Mark* xii. 29. From which it appears, that the *Unity* of the GODHEAD, is the Foundation of all the divine Commandments, and of all human Worſhip. That it is impoſſible to give the LORD the Honour due unto his Name, unleſs We regard Him as the Poſſeſſor of *all* Perfection; to whom no Being is equal, or ſecond, or in any Degree comparable.

‡ *Unfaultering*—For though, in *Plato*'s Book of Laws, We meet with ὁ Θεὸς—τῷ Θεῷ—τὸν Θεὸν again and again; yet He ſoon departs from this *ſound Speech*, and relapſes into the Language of Idolatry.

A learned and ingenious Friend, would fain have *Socrates* exempted from this Charge.—I wiſh, I could gratify his benevolent Temper, and ſpare that amiable Philoſopher. But, however juſtly He may expreſs Himſelf on ſome Occaſions, at other Times He wavers; He evidently

Ther. With regard to the Philosophers, the Prejudices of a wrong Education, might pervert their Judgment; or, in compliance with the prevailing Mode, they might adopt Customs, and assent to Notions, which they did not thoroughly approve.

Asp. A poor Compliment this to their Integrity! Had I been their Advocate, methinks, I would have given up the Sagacity of my Clients, rather than their Fidelity to the Cause of GOD and of Truth.

With reference to the *supreme GOOD*, they were equally at a loss.—There's not one among all the inferior Creatures; not even the crawling Worm,

dently revolts; and is most pitiably inconsistent with Himself.—Even in his excellent Conference with *Aristodemus*, where He argues admirably well for the *Existence*, He cannot steadily adhere to the *Unity* of the GOD-HEAD.—Nay; in his last solemn Apology before his Judges, He publicly *renounces* the Truth; declares, that He worshipped those Gods, which were acknowledged by his Countrymen; worshipped them, and no other; on the same Festivals, at the same Altars, and in the same (*idolatrous*) Manner.—*No other:* these are his Words, Ουτε γαρ εγωγε αντι Διος, και Ηρας, και των συν τουτοις Θεων, ουτε θυων τισι καινοις Δαιμοσιν, ουτε ομνυς, ουτε ονομαζων αλλους Θεους αναπεφηνα. SOCRAT. Memor. Lib. I. c. i. Sect. 11, 24.

Let none conclude, from this or any other Passage, That We would consign over all the Heathens to Damnation. This is as far from our Intention, as it is foreign to the Argument. We are only like Witnesses, summoned to give in our Evidence. From which it appears, that the very best among the *Gentiles*, were ignorant of the true GOD; or, if *they knew Him*, in any Degree, *they glorified Him not as GOD; but became vain in their Imagination*, and vile in their Worship.—*Whether* they shall obtain Mercy, or *which* of them shall be Objects of divine Clemency, is left *solely* to the Determination of their supreme, unerring, righteous JUDGE:

——*Non nostrum est tantas componere Lites.* VIRG.

Worm, or the buzzing Fly; but perceives what is *beneficial*, and purſues it; diſcerns what is *pernicious*, and avoids it. Yonder Caterpillar, whoſe Nouriſhment is from one particular Species of Vegetables, never makes a wrong Application to another: never is allured by the Fragrance of the Auricula, or dazzled by the Splendor of the Tulip; but conſtantly diſtinguiſhes, and as conſtantly adheres to the Leaf, which affords her the proper Food. So *ſagacious* are the meaneſt Animals, with relation to their reſpective Happineſs! While the moſt celebrated of the Heathen Sages were, on a Subject of the very ſame Import, mere *Dotards*.—*Varro* reckons up no leſs than two hundred and eighty-eight different Opinions, concerning the true Good; and not one of them derives it from the true Source. I mean a Conformity to the ever-bleſſed GOD, and an Enjoyment of his infinite Perfections.

If, on theſe *leading* Points, they were ſo erroneous; no Wonder, that they were bewildered in their other Reſearches. No Wonder, that, being thus *fooliſh*, they were alſo *diſobedient*; that, *having loſt* * *their Way* to Happineſs, they took every Deceiver for a Guide, and *ſerved divers Luſts and Pleaſures*.

Ther. We are not enquiring into the Circumſtances of this or that particular Nation; but into the State of Mankind in general.

Aſp. Caſt your Eye, *Theron*, upon thoſe Swallows. They ſhoot themſelves, with ſurpriſing Rapidity, through

* *Tit.* iii. 3. The Original is πλανωμενοι.—The Caſe of the *Grecians* and *Romans* was touched upon, pag. 120. But the true Deciſion of this Enquiry, and the true Character of thoſe People, may be ſeen, *Rom.* i. 21, 22, &c. to the End of the Chapter.

through the Air. I ſhould take them for ſo many living Arrows, were it not for their ſhifting, winding, wanton Motions.—Are not theſe what You call *Birds of Paſſage?*

Ther. Theſe, and ſome other of the feathered Race, are our conſtant Viſitants in Summer; but leave Us, at the Approach of Winter. As ſoon as the Weather becomes cold, they aſſemble themſelves in a Body; and concert Meaſures, for their Departure. *Who* convenes the Aſſembly—*What* Debates ariſe—Or *how* they communicate the Reſolution taken—I do not preſume to ſay. This is certain, that not one of them diſlodges, till the Affair is ſettled, and the Proclamation has been publiſhed. Not a ſingle Loiterer is to be ſeen, when the Troops are preparing for their Decampment; nor a ſingle Straggler to be found, when they have once begun their March.—Having finiſhed their Journey through the Land, their Wings become a ſort of Sails *; and they launch, though not into, yet over the Ocean. Without any *Compaſs*, to regulate their Courſe; or any *Chart*, to make Obſervations in their Voyage; they arrive ſafely at the deſired Shore. And what is ſtill more extraordinary, they always find the readieſt Way, and the ſhorteſt Cut.

Aſp. The Stork in the Heavens knoweth her appointed Times: and the Turtle, and the Crane, and the Swallow, obſerve the Time of their Coming: but my People know not the Judgment of their GOD †. The young Ones of thoſe Birds perceive, how abſolutely neceſſary it is, to forſake the Land of their Nativity, and travel in queſt of milder Climes.—But our Offspring, even when their Minds begin to open, *are brutiſh in their*

* *Remigio Alarum.* VIRG. † Jer. viii. 7.

their Knowledge *. Born they are, and too long continue, *like the wild Aſs's Colt* †. Not only quite deſtitute of heavenly wiſdom, but ſtupid to apprehend it, and averſe to receive it. *As ſoon as they are born, they go aſtray*, and—

Ther. *Go aſtray*—To what is this owing, but to the *bad Examples* they behold? They catch the wayward Habit, from the irregular Converſation of others.

Aſp. Is not this a Confirmation of my Point? Why are they *yielding* Clay ‡ to each bad Impreſſion?—*Caſe-hardened* Steel to every edifying Application?—To do Miſchief, to be proud of their Apparel, to ſeek Revenge ||, they are not teachable only, but ſelf-taught. Whereas, if You would affect them with a Senſe of divine Things, or bring them acquainted with GOD their Maker; *Line muſt be upon Line, Line upon Line: Precept muſt be upon Precept, Precept upon Precept: Here a little, and*

* Jer. x. 14.

† *Job* xi. 12. How keenly is this Compariſon pointed!—Like the *Aſs*'s, an Animal remarkable for its Stupidity, even to a Proverb.—Like the *Aſs*'s *Colt*, which muſt be ſtill more egregiouſly ſtupid than the Dam.—Like the *wild Aſs*'s *Colt*, which is not only blockiſh, but ſtubborn and intractable; neither poſſeſſes valuable Qualities by Nature, nor will eaſily receive them by Diſcipline.—The Image, in the Original, is yet more ſtrongly touched. The comparitive Particle *like* is not in the *Hebrew*; *born a wild Aſs*'s *Colt*; or, as We ſhould ſay in *Engliſh*, *a mere wild*, &c.

‡ *Cereus in Vitium flecti.*

|| This is evident, from the Succeſs of a Method, frequently but injudiciouſly uſed to quiet Children. The Method I mean, of *beating* the Thing, which has raiſed their Indignation.

and there a little *.—What farther corroborates my Sentiment, is, That all theſe tender Toils of Erudition are generally unwelcome; are too often unſucceſsful; nay, will always be ineffectual, without the Concurrence of Almighty Grace.

Beſides, *Theron*, if this Propenſity to Evil be obſervable in *all* Children, it ſeems more than probable, that the unhappy Bias is derived from their Parents, rather than catched from their Neighbours; and owing, not to the Influence of external Examples, but to a Principle of internal Corruption †.—Neglect the Education of Children, and You are ſure to have their Manners evil, their Lives unprofitable. Nay, only remit your Endeavours, and they loſe what has been gained: they ſtart aſide, like a broken Bow ‡. And wherefore this? Why do they not, without the Rules

* A great Critic has laid down the following Rule, to be obſerved in fine Writing;

'Tis not enough no Harſhneſs gives Offence,
The Sound muſt be an Echo to the Senſe.

POPE's *Eſſay on Criticiſm.*

Never was this delicate Maxim more nicely exemplified, than in the above-cited Paſſage of *Iſaiah*, Chap. xxviii. 13.—Another Inſtance of the ſame kind occurs in the ſeventh Verſe. Where the Language ſeems to mimic the *reeling*, *ſtraggling*, *giddy* Motions of a Drunkard: while it iterates and reiterates the Idea; expreſſes the ſame Thing, in a different and ſtill different Manner; with an apparent, and, in this Caſe, a ſignificant *Circumrotation* of Words.

† St. *Paul* confeſſes, that He and his Fellow-ſaints were, in their unconverted State, depraved: and this, not διὰ τὴν ἕξιν, by *Cuſtom* or *Habit*, but φυσει, by *Nature*. Eph. ii. 3.

‡ ——————*Ad Mores Natura recurrit*
Damnatos, fixa & mutari neſcia. JUVEN.

Rules of Diſcipline or Leſſons of Inſtruction, *ſpontaneouſly* addict themſelves to the Exerciſe of every Virtue? Juſt as the Cygnets, in yonder Canal, ſpontaneouſly take to the Element of Water, and the Act of Swimming.

That Bed, in the Garden before Us, will ſuggeſt the Reaſon. It has been digged and dreſſed this very Day. It now lies ſmooth and clean. Not a ſingle Weed appears on its Surface. Yet, how certainly will it, in a very little Time, produce a plenteous Growth of thoſe vegetable Nuiſances?—Whence can this proceed? No Hand will ſow them. No Wiſh will invite them. But the *Seeds*, though unperceived by any Eye, are *already* there. Diſſeminated by the Winds, they have mixed themſelves with the Mold, and are ſunk into the Soil.—So, juſt ſo, it is with our Children. The Seeds of Iniquity are *within* * them; and, unleſs proper Diligence be exerted by Us, unleſs gracious Aſſiſtance be vouchſafed from above, they will aſſuredly ſpring up; over-run their Souls; and diſhonour their Lives.

Ther. Let Us leave the Children, and make *Men* the Subject of our Enquiry.

Aſp. In this Reſpect, *Theron*,

Men are but Children of a larger Growth.

We may leave the Veſt or Hanging-ſleeve Coat, but We ſhall ſtill find the Follies of the Child.—In *Youth*,

* Whoever chooſes to examine the Seeds, the poiſonous Seeds, which are lodged in this *Nurſery* of all Evil, may ſee a Sample of them in our LORD's Deſcription, *Mark* vii. 20, 21, 22, 23. Where He characterizes the Heart, not barely of the hypocritical Phariſee, or the abandoned Publican, but of Mankind in general.

Youth, what low Ambition, and Fondneſs for deſpi-cable Pleaſures.—In *Manhood*, what a keen Purſuit of tranſitory Wealth; yet what a cold Inattention to GOD and Holineſs!—Men, and Men too of enlarged Underſtanding, whoſe Penetration on other Subjects, is piercing as the Eagle's Sight, are, on the moſt important Points, *blind* as the incaverned Mole.

Ther. What! is the Underſtanding like the moſt *dim-ſighted* Animal, when lodged in her darkeſt Retirement? That ſublime Faculty of the Soul; which lends her Eye to all the reſt; ſits at the Helm, and directs their Motions!

Aſp. You remember, I preſume, that beautiful Paſſage in *Milton* *; which Mr. *Addiſon* ſo highly admires, and ſo judiciouſly illuſtrates. The Paſſage I mean, where the Archangel *Michael* comes down, to adverti'e *Adam* of future Events, and to execute the Sentence of divine Juſtice.

Ther. I remember it perfectly well.—In the Eaſt, the great Light of Day lies under an Eclipſe. In the Weſt, a bright Cloud deſcends, more luminous than the Sun itſelf. The whole Theatre of Nature is darkened, that this glorious Machine may appear in all its Magnificence and Beauty.—From this radiant Meteor, the *Potentate* of *Heaven* alights; and advances, with a majeſtic Statelineſs, to meet *Adam*.

Aſp. Should You ſee ſuch an auguſt Perſonage, alighting from his ſplendid Chariot, and walking amidſt the thronged Streets of a City?—Should You behold every One intent upon his Buſineſs or Diverſions; ſtruck with no *Awe*; paying no *reverential* Regard

* Book XI, 203, &c.

Regard to this celeſtial Viſitant; what would You think?

Ther. I ſhould certainly ſuſpect, that ſome ſuperior Power had drawn a *Veil* over their Sight, and hid this wonderful Spectacle from their View.

Aſp. Such is really the Caſe with all Mankind by Nature, and with the Generality of People, during their whole Life.—GOD, the infinitely great GOD, is in every Place. Yet how few *advert* to his Preſence!—All Nature exhibits Him to their Senſes; yet, perhaps, He is not in any of their Thoughts.

The Sun, clothed in tranſcendent Brightneſs, moſt illuſtriouſly diſplays his MAKER's Glory. The Moon, though dreſt in fainter Beams, has Luſtre enough to ſhew Us the adorable DEITY, and his marvelous Perfections. The Stars, fixed as they are at an unmeaſurable Diſtance, and *leſſened* almoſt to a Point, come in with their Evidence, and *magnify* their CREATOR to a gazing but unaffected World.

The Air *whiſpers* his Clemency in the gentle, the refreſhing Gales of Spring. If We take no Notice of this ſoft perſuaſive Addreſs, the Tone is elevated; the Majeſty of JEHOVAH *ſounds aloud*, in roaring Winds, and rending Storms. Yet *both* Expedients fail. Man is like the deaf Adder, that ſtoppeth her Ears. He refuſeth to hear the Voice of the Charmers, charm they never ſo ſweetly, never ſo forcibly.

Each Flower, arrayed in Beauty, and breathing Perfume, courts our Affections for its infinitely amiable AUTHOR.—Not a Bird that ſings among the Branches, nor a Brook that murmurs over the

Pebbles, but invites our Praiſe, or chides our Ingratitude.—All the Claſſes of Fruits depoſit their Atteſtation on our Palates, yet ſeldom reach our Hearts. They give Us a Proof of the divine Benignity; a Proof, as *undeniable* as it is pleaſing, and too often as *ineffectual* alſo.

In ſhort; the whole Creation is a Kind of magnificent Embaſſy from its Almighty LORD, deputed to proclaim *his Excellencies*, and demand *our Homage*. Yet, who has not diſregarded the former, and with-held the latter?—How Few walk, as ſeeing HIM that is inviſible, or have Fellowſhip with the FATHER of Spirits? Though, to walk before Him, is our *higheſt* Dignity; and to have Fellowſhip with Him, is our *only* Felicity?

Ther. This is owing to *Inattention*, rather than to any Blindneſs or Defect in Man's Underſtanding. The many Works of Genius, which have been produced in various Ages, are an abundant Proof of his intellectual Capacity.—Have not the Seas been traverſed, and the Skies meaſured? Has not the Earth been diſemboweled of its choiceſt Treaſures; while its Surface is beautified with Towns, Cities, Palaces, innumerable?—What fine Arts are invented and exerciſed; and to what a Pitch of Perfection are they carried? Arts that ſeem, if not to exceed, at leaſt to *rival* Nature.—It was the Underſtanding, which formed all theſe great Deſigns. It was the Underſtanding, which contrived the Means, and conducted the Execution.—And are not theſe unqueſtionable Evidences of her very ſuperior Abilities?

Aſp. Then ſhe is like ſome great Empreſs, who conquers half the World, but is unable to rule *Her-*

ſelf. Who extends her Regulations into foreign Climes, while her domeſtic Affairs are involved in Confuſion.—Do You doubt the Reality of this Remark? Set Yourſelf to meditate upon the moſt intereſting Truths. How *deſultory*, how *incoherent* are your Thoughts?—Charge them to be collected. They diſobey your Orders.—Rally the undiſciplined Vagrants. Again they deſert the Taſk.—Exert all your Power, and keep them cloſe to their Buſineſs. Still they elude your Endeavours.

The other Day, I could not forbear ſmiling at a little Adventure of your youngeſt Son's. Some *Quickſilver*, which happened to be ſpilt upon the Floor, parted into ſeveral Globules. The ſhining Balls looked ſo prettily, he longed to make them his own. But when he offered to take them up, they ſlipt from his Hand. As often as he renewed the Attempt, ſo often He met with a Diſappointment. The cloſer He ſtrove to graſp them, the more ſpeedily they eſcaped from his Fingers. He ſeemed, at firſt, to be amazed; then became quite angry, that the little *Fugitives* ſhould ſo conſtantly *baffle* his repeated Efforts.—Thus unmanageable I very often find my own Thoughts. If yours are under no better Regimen, this may convince Us both, that all is not according to the original Creation.

We apply Ourſelves to converſe with the everlaſting GOD in *Prayer*. Here, One would expect to have the Thoughts all Clearneſs, and all Compoſure. But Here *We are not ſufficient of Ourſelves, to think any Thing as of Ourſelves* *. All thoſe holy Ideas, which create Reverence, or ſtrengthen Faith, or quicken Love, come from the FATHER of Lights.

* 2 Cor. iii. 5.

Should HE withdraw His Influence, all will be dull, and dark, and dead.—It may be, We are ſomewhat enlivened in this ſacred Exerciſe; before We are aware, perhaps in the very Midſt of the ſolemn Office, our Attention is *diſſipated*; and not diſſipated only, but *ſcattered* to the Ends of the Earth. The GOD of all Glory is forſaken, and the Devotion paid to ſome ſenſeleſs Foppery. A Malefactor, begging his Life at the Knees of his Sovereign; and diſcontinuing his Suit, in order to careſs a *Lapdog*, or purſue a *Butterfly*; is but a faint Image of the Vanity which attends our devotional Services.—Reaſon, which ought to correct theſe Irregularities, is treated like the incredulous Lord; who, inſtead of controuling the unruly Multitude, was overborne by their Impetuoſity, and trodden under Foot *.

Since then the Reins are ſtruck out of our Hands, and We have loſt the Rule over our own Faculties; ſurely, We are in a State different, very different from our primitive Conſtitution.

Ther. However inſenſible to *refined* Speculation, the Underſtanding, when *Intereſt* is in the Caſe, is apprehenſive enough.

Aſp. In temporal †, not in ſpiritual Affairs.—Your younger Brother, *Theron*, is a Merchant. We will ſuppoſe Him at the Sea-ſide; within a ſmall Diſtance of the Veſſel, on which a conſiderable Part of his Subſtance is embarked. We will ſuppoſe the Veſſel in the utmoſt Diſtreſs; ready to founder with her Leaks, or to ſtrike upon the Rocks.—If he diſcovers no Sign of Concern; calls in no Aſſiſtance from

* 2 Kings vii. 17.

† Called therefore by the Apoſtle, *Fleſhly Wiſdom*, and oppoſed to the Grace of GOD. 2 *Cor.* i. 12.

from the Country; makes no Effort to *ſave* the Crew, and *ſecure* the Cargo; would You not think him bereaved of his Underſtanding, or deprived of his Sight?—Could You conceive a more favourable Opinion of his Eyes or his Intellect? If, inſtead of trying every Method to prevent a Shipwreck, He ſhould amuſe Himſelf with picking *Shells* from the Ocean, or drawing *Figures* on the Sand?

We, and every One of our Fellow-creatures, have an Intereſt in Jeopardy, unſpeakably more precious, than all the rich Lading of a thouſand Fleets. Our Souls, our immortal Souls, are expoſed, every Day, every Hour, to the Peril of *everlaſting Deſtruction*. Every Temptation is threatening to their endleſs Welfare, as a Ridge of craggy Rocks to a Ship that drives before the ſtrongeſt Gale.—Yet, how unconcerned are Mankind? Where is their holy Fear? Where their godly Jealouſy? Where their wakeful Circumſpection? Rather, what a *gay Inſenſibility* is obſervable in their Behaviour? Or elſe, what a *lifeleſs Formality* prevails in their Supplications? Their Supplications to that Almighty BEING, who alone is able to ſave and to deſtroy.—Was not the human Underſtanding both darkened and beſotted, We ſhould ſee our Neighbours, We ſhould feel Ourſelves awakened, into much the ſame earneſt Solititude, as the Diſciples expreſſed; when, perceiving the Waves boiſtrous, and their Bark ſinking, they cried; *LORD! Save Us! We periſh!*

But alas! in Things of an unſeen Nature, though of eternal Conſequence, *Intereſt*, that habitual Darling of every Heart, loſes its engaging Influence. Nay; when Eternity, all-important Eternity is at ſtake, even *Self-preſervation* is ſcarce any longer a

governing Principle.—What can be more deplorable? And, if We admit not the Doctrine of original Corruption, what ſo unaccountable?

Ther. This, I muſt confeſs, is true, with regard to the unthinking Rabble. To them may be accommodated the Remark of *Auguſtus*. Who, when he ſaw ſome foreign Females, carrying Apes in their Arms inſtead of Infants, ſaid to one of his Courtiers; "Have the Women of thoſe Countries *no Children*, "that they are ſo fond of ſuch deſpicable Ani- "mals?"—The Vulgar are ſo immerſed in ſecular Cares, that One might indeed be tempted to aſk; "Have thoſe People *no Souls?* that Buying and "Selling, Eating and Drinking, engroſs their "whole Concern?"—But Perſons of Rank and Education, think in a more exalted Manner.

Aſp. Do you then imagine, that an Elevation of Circumſtances ſets the Affections on Things above? Or, that it is the peculiar Infelicity of the *Vulgar*, to *grovel* in their Deſires?—Gold, I believe, is more likely to increaſe, than to diſſipate, the Fog on the intellectual Faculties. Abundance of Poſſeſſions, inſtead of diſengaging the Heart, faſten it more inſeparably to the Earth. Even ſuperior Attainments in Learning, if not ſanctified by Grace, ſerve only to render the Owner ſomewhat more refined in his Follies, or *vainly to puff up his fleſhly Mind* *.—But Compariſons, between the various Claſſes of Mankind, are as uſeleſs as they are invidious. None, in either Condition, attend to the Things which make for their Peace, till they are *awakened* from their Lethargy, by the quickening SPIRIT of *CHRIST*. And even then We cannot but obſerve

* Col. ii. 18.

ſerve evident Indications of much *remaining* Blindneſs.

How apt are ſuch Perſons to miſtake the Way of Salvation? To place their own Works for a Foundation of Hope, inſtead of *CHRIST*, the Rock of Ages? Thinking, by their own Performances to *win*, not ſeeking from unmerited Grace to *receive*, the Inheritance of eternal Glory. Which is more abſurdly vain, than to offer Toys as an Equivalent for Thrones; or to dream of purchaſing Diadems with a Mite.—They are alſo prone to miſapprehend the Nature of Holineſs. Are zealous to regulate the *external* Conduct, without attending to the Renovation of the *Heart*: in outward Forms elaborate; with reſpect to inward Sanctity, leſs if it all exact. A Labour juſt as prepoſterous, as to ſkin over the Surface of a Wound, while it feſters at the Bottom, and conſumes the Bone.

Give me Leave to aſk, *Theron*; When our LORD declares, *Unleſs a Man be born again, He cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven* *: when He ſpeaks of *eating his Fleſh*, and *drinking his Blood* †: when You hear or read of Union with the bleſſed *JESUS*, or Communion with the moſt high GOD: is there not a Cloud, if not total Darkneſs, on your Mind ‡?

—How

* John iii. 3. † John vi. 54.

‡ With regard to the Myſteries of *CHRIST*, the greateſt Proficients are but *Obtuſe acuti*, Dull even in their Acuteneſs.—What ſays the wiſe *Agur*? An invaluable Fragment of whoſe Works, is preſerved in the Book of *Proverbs*. *Surely, I am more brutiſh than any Man, and have not the Underſtanding of a Man*: even though the following Verſes beſpeak the very ſingular Elevation and Extent of his Knowledge. *Prov.* xxx. 2.—Conformably to the Experience of this excellent Man, I have always

—How erroneous was the *Pſalmiſt* himſelf, in his Judgment concerning the divine Diſpoſals? *So fooliſh was I and ignorant, even as it were a Beaſt,* or as the verieſt Beaſt *before Thee* *.—The Voice of Experience therefore will atteſt, what the Word of Revelation has averred; That *the natural Man,* be his intellectual Abilities ever ſo pregnant, or ever ſo improved, *cannot know the Things of the SPIRIT of GOD* †: He has no Sight to diſcern their Beauty; no Taſte to reliſh their Sweetneſs. Nay, though they

obſerved, that the more enlightened People are, the more they lament their Ignorance; the more they pant after a continual Progreſs in heavenly Knowledge; the more they pray for clearer, ſtill clearer Manifeſtations of the incomprehenſible GOD, and his tranſcendently rich Grace in *CHRIST JESUS.*

* I queſtion, whether *Aſpaſio*'s Tranſlation comes fully up to the Emphaſis of the Original. The comparative Particle is omitted in the *Hebrew.* *As* ſoftens and palliates the Matter. Therefore the *Pſalmiſt,* to expreſs the deepeſt Senſe of his Ignorance, ſays, *I was a Beaſt,* yea, *the verieſt Beaſt,* בהמות, Pſal. lxxiii. 22.—In Figures equally ſtrong, and equally abaſing, is this Blindneſs of our fallen Nature deſcribed, by the Writers of the New Teſtament. Men, in their natural State, are *Children of Darkneſs*; nurſed up by Ignorance, and totally ſubject to its Influence. 1 *Theſſ.* v. 5. They *walk in Darkneſs*; it is the very Element, in which they live and move. *John* xii. 35. Nay; they are not only *in* Darkneſs, but Darkneſs *itſelf.* *Eph.* v. 8. Their Souls are like the Region, which *Job,* with ſuch inimitable Energy, deſcribes; *A Land of Darkneſs,* gloomy and horrible *as the Shadow of Death*; where all is Confuſion, *without any Order*; *and the very Light,* or that which ſhould illuminate the diſmal Shades, *is the Blackneſs of Darkneſs.* Job x. 22.—Let me cloſe my Note, with the candid but weighty Sentence, which cloſes *Xenophon*'s Hiſtory of *Cyrus.* Ει δε τις ταναντια εμοι γινωσκει, τα εμα των ανθρωπων επισκοπων, ευρησει αυτα μαλιστα τοις εμοις λογοις.

† 1 Cor. ii. 14.

they are the pureſt Light, and the moſt perfect Wiſdom, to Him they appear, not only dark and obſcure, but even *Fooliſhneſs* itſelf.

Would this be the Caſe, if the Underſtanding was not greatly depraved? Should it be difficult for your Ear, to diſtinguiſh the Diverſity of Sounds; or for your Eye, to diſcern the Variety of Colours; would You not conclude, that the Organs were very much *impaired?*

Ther. I think, You have treated the Underſtanding, as *Zopyrus* ſerved his own Body *, when he went over to the Enemy.—Do You intend to mangle the other Faculties, at the ſame unmerciful Rate?

Aſp. That Nobleman *made* the Wounds, which diſfigured his Fleſh. I have only *probed* the Sores, which were found in the Underſtanding. If I have touched the Quick, and put the Patient to Pain, it is only to facilitate the Operation of Medicine, and make way for a Cure.—But permit me to aſk, Wherein does the Excellency of the human *Will* conſiſt?

Ther. In following the Guidance of Reaſon, and ſubmitting to the Influence of proper Authority.

Aſp. The Will, I fear, rejects the Government of Reaſon; and it is undeniably certain, that it rebels againſt the Authority of GOD.

Caſt your Eye upon that *Team* of *Horſes*, with which yonder Countryman is ploughing his fallow Ground. No leſs than five of thoſe robuſt Animals are linked together, and yield their ſubmiſſive Necks to the Draught. They have more Strength than twenty Men, yet are managed by a *ſingle Lad*. They not only ſtand in awe of the Laſh, but liſten to the Voice

* See ROLLIN's *Ancient Hiſt.* Vol. III. *p.* 46.

Voice of their Driver. They turn to the Right-hand or to the Left; they quicken their Pace, or ſtop ſhort in the Furrow; at the bare Intimation of his Pleaſure.—Are *We* equally obedient to the Calls, to the Exhortations, the expreſs Injunctions of our heavenly LORD? The bleſſed *JESUS* ſpoke at the Beginning, and the World was made. He ſpeaks by his Providence, and the Univerſe is upheld. When He ſhall ſpeak at the laſt Day, the Heavens will paſs away, and the Earth be diſſolved. Yet He ſpeaks to Us in his divine Word, and We turn a deaf Ear to his Addreſs. He ſpeaks in tender Expoſtulations, and no Melting of Heart enſues. He ſpeaks in precious Promiſes, and no ardent Deſires are enkindled.—The Will, which, in theſe Caſes, ought to be turned as *Wax* to the *Seal*, is unimpreſſed and inflexible as an *iron Sinew*.

Ther. The human Will is conſtantly inclined to preſerve, accommodate, and make its Poſſeſſor happy. Is not this the right *Poſition*, in which it ſhould always ſtand? Or the moſt deſirable *Direction*, that can be given to its Motions?

Aſp. I ſhould be glad, if Fact bore witneſs to your Aſſertion. But Fact, I apprehend, is on the contrary Side.—I took notice, as we came along, of ſome *Ants* buſily employed on a little Hillock. Have You made any Obſervations, *Theron*, on this reptile Community?

Ther. It is a little *Republic* *. They inhabit a Kind of oblong City, divided into various Streets. They are governed by Laws, and regulated by Politics, of their own. Their Magazines are commodiouſly formed, and judiciouſly guarded againſt the Injuries

* See *Nat. Diſpl.* Vol. I.

juries of the Weather. Some are defended by an Arch made of Earth, and cemented with a peculiar Sort of Glue. Some are covered with Rafters of ſlender Wood, and thatched with Ruſhes or Graſs. The Roof is always raiſed with a double Slope, to turn away the Current of the Waters, and ſhoot the Rain from their Store-houſes. They all *beſtir* themſelves, with *inceſſant* Aſſiduity, while the Air is ſerene; while the Roads are good; and Abundance of looſe Grain lies ſcattered over the Fields.—By theſe Precautions, they live ſecure, when Storms embroil the Sky; they want no Manner of Conveniency, even when Winter lays waſte the Plains.

Aſp. Do *We* improve, ſo diligently, our preſent Opportunities? This Life is the Seed-time of Eternity. Do We huſband the precious Moments, like Perſons ſenſible of their unſpeakable Importance? Senſible, that if We trifle and are indolent, *they* will be irrecoverably gone, and *We* irretrievably ruined.

Sickneſs, We know not how ſoon, may invade Us, Pain may torment Us, and both may iſſue in our final Diſſolution. Are We duly aware of theſe awful Changes, and properly ſolicitous to put all in order for their Approach?—We walk (alarming Thought!) upon the very Brink of Death, Reſurrection, and Judgment. Do We walk like *wiſe Virgins*, with our Loins girt; with our Lamps trimmed; in a State of continual Readineſs, for the heavenly BRIDEGROOM's Advent?

Thoſe Ants *have no Guide, Overſeer, or Ruler. Yet they prepare their Meat in the Summer, and gather their Food in the Harveſt* *. We have all theſe, yet neglect the Time of our Viſitation.—We have GOD's

* Prov. vi. 7.

GOD's unerring Word, to guide Us; GOD's ever-watchful Eye, to overſee Us; GOD's ſovereign Command, to rule and quicken Us. Notwithſtanding all theſe Motives, is not the Speech of the Sluggard, the very Language of our Conduct? *A little more Sleep, a little more Slumber, a little more Folding of the Hands to ſleep* *. The moſt ſupine Indifference, where all poſſible Diligence is but juſt ſufficient!—This, You muſt allow, is the true Character of Mankind in general. And does this demonſtrate the *Rectitude* of their Will.

Ther. The Underſtanding may be ſaid to carry the Torch, the Will to hold the Balance. Now, the Perfection of a Balance conſiſts, in being ſo nicely poiſed, as to incline at the *leaſt* Touch, and preponderate with the *lighteſt* Weight. This Property belongs, without all Diſpute, to the human Will.

Aſp. What? If one of your Scales ſhould deſcend to the Ground, though charged with Trifles, that are light as Air? If the other ſhould kick the Beam, though its Contents be weighter, than Talents of Gold?—Is not this an exact Repreſentation of our Will,

* There is, if I miſtake not, a nice Gradation, in this Speech of the Sluggard; ſuch as very naturally *mimics* the Manner of that lazy Creature.—He pleads, firſt, for ſome conſiderable Degree of Indulgence, *A little Sleep*.—If that is too much to be granted, He craves ſome ſmaller Toleration of his Sloth; *A little Slumber*.—If the Taſk-maſter ſtill rings in his Ear; ſtill goads his Side; one almoſt ſees the dull Wretch, rubbing his heavy Eyes, and yawning out his laſt Requeſt; *A little Folding of the Hands* at leaſt *to lie down*, חבק ידים לשכב Prov. vi. 10.—When ſuch is our Conduct with regard to *eternal* Intereſts, how juſtly may We apply that ſpirited Expoſtulation of the Poet;

Tantamne Rem tam negligenter!

Will, when the *fleeting* Pleaſures of Senſe, or the *puny* Intereſts of Time, excite our Wiſhes; even while the ſolid Delights of Religion, and the immenſely rich Treaſures of Immortality, can hardly obtain our Attention?—However, let Us quit the Metaphor, and examine Fact. Suppoſe, I make it appear, that, inſtead of chooſing the moſt eligible Objects, the Will is ſo deplorably vitiated, as to *loathe* what is ſalutary, and be *fond* of what is baneful.

Ther. If You prove this to be univerſally the Caſe, You will prove your favourite Point with a witneſs.

Aſp. When Providence is pleaſed to thwart our Meaſures, or defeat our Endeavours; to bring Us under the Cloud of Diſgrace, or lay upon Us the Rod of Affliction? what is our Behaviour?—Do We bow our Heads in *humble* Reſignation? Do We open our Mouths in *thankful* Acknowledgments?—Obſerve the Waters in that elegant octangular Baſon. They aſſimilate themſelves, with the utmoſt Readineſs, and with equal Exactneſs, to the Veſſel which contains them. *So* would the human Will, if it were not extremely froward and fooliſh, conform itſelf to the divine: which is unerringly wiſe, and, of all poſſible Contingencies, incomparably the beſt *.—Yet, how apt are We to fret with Diſquietude;

* This ſeems to be the Meaning of the Prophet, ארח לצדיק מישרים. Iſai. xxvi. 7. Not—*The Way of the Juſt is Uprightneſs*—A Senſe, which the Conſtruction of the Words will but difficultly admit; which, in the preſent Connection, is hardly conſiſtent with Humility; and by no means proper, to introduce a devotional Addreſs to the great JEHOVAH. Rather—*GOD's Way to the Juſt is Uprightneſs*; or, ſtill more emphatically, *Uprightneſſes*. Is in *all* Reſpects irreprovable, excellent, admirable; ſuited, perfectly ſuited, to every ſacred Attribute of Wiſdom, Goodneſs, and Truth.

quietude; and ſtruggle under afflictive Diſpenſations, *as a wild Bull in a Net!*

Ther. This is a very imperfect Proof, *Aſpaſio*, and correſponds with only Part of your Accuſation. We may diſlike what is wholeſome, eſpecially if it be unpalatable, yet not be fond of our Bane.

Aſp. Should You ſee a Perſon, who thirſts after the putrid Lake, but diſreliſhes the clear running Fountain; who longs for the *impoiſoned* Berries of the Nightſhade, but abhors the *delicious* Fruit of the Orchard, would You applaud the Regularity of his Appetite?—I don't wait for your Anſwer. But I more than ſuſpect, this is a true Picture of all unregenerate People. See! how they affect Dreſs and external Ornament; but are unwilling, rather than deſirous, to be *clothed with Humility* *, and *to put on CHRIST* †! Amuſement will engage, Play animate, and Diverſion fire them: but as to the Worſhip of the living GOD, O! *what a Wearineſs is it* ‡! Frothy Novels, and flatulent Wit, regale their Taſte; while the Marrow and Fatneſs of the divine Word, are "as their ſorrowful Meat ‖." Flatter them; and, though your Speech is a luſcious Poiſon §, their Eyes ſparkle with Delight. Admoniſh

* 1 Pet. v. 5. † Rom. xiii. 14. ‡ Mal. i. 13.

‖ Job vi. 7. כדוי לחמי *Sicut Cibi Languorum, As the Meat of my Sickneſs.* For which We have no Appetite; in which We find no Reliſh, and which We frequently loath.

§ Mr. *Bonnel*, in one of his Evening Examinations, recollecting that He had heard Himſelf praiſed; and being conſcious, that He heard it with Delight—taking Honour to Himſelf, and not *giving GOD the Glory*, Acts xii. 23.—Made this Memorandum in his Diary; "To-day, I have been bathing my Soul in Poiſon."

moniſh them; and though your Service is *an excellent Oil* *, Diſſatisfaction lours on their Brow.—What is all this, but to lothe the Salutary, and long for † the Baneful?

Let

* Pſal. cxli. 5.

† Would the Reader ſee this unhappy Contraſt drawn in the ſtrongeſt Colours, and by the moſt rhetorical Accumulation of Words? He may compare the royal Preacher, and the mourning Prophet.—*Becauſe I have called, and* Ye refuſed; *I have ſtretched out my Hand, and* no Man regarded: *But ye have* ſet at nought *all my Counſel, and* would none *of my Reproof.* What a Croud of ſimilar Ideas! Emphatically declaring the moſt incorrigible Perverſeneſs; which is Proof againſt every Method of Reformation; againſt all the Arts even of divine Perſuaſion. *Prov.* i. 24, 25.—*The Hoſt of Heaven, whom they have* loved, *and whom they have* ſerved, *and after whom they have* walked, *and whom they have* ſought, *and whom they have* worſhipped. What a Heap of ſynonimous Expreſſions! Significantly deſcribing the moſt impetuous Ardour and Avidity, in the Ways of Sin; an Ardour, which no Prohibitions can reſtrain; and an Avidity, which never knows when to ſay, "It is enough." *Jer.* viii. 2.

If I beg Leave to add another Example of this Kind, it is chiefly for the Sake of clearing up an obſcure Paſſage in the *Pſalms*; which ſeems to have been miſtaken by the Authors of *both* our Verſions.—*David*, to ſet forth the barbarous Aſſiduity of his Perſecutors, ſays; *They wander up and down.* They pry into every Corner; they ſearch the City, and examine the Country; יאכל not *for Meat*; (which, in this Connection, is a Senſe quite foreign to the Subject, and very jejune indeed) but *to devour.* To devour me the deſtined Victim of their Rage. *And if they are not ſatisfied*, if they cannot compaſs their Deſign by Day, וילינו *they will grudge?* No; but *they will continue all Night*, in the Proſecution of their Purpoſe. Neither Cold nor Darkneſs can retard them; neither Hardſhips nor Dangers can deter them; but their Attempts are as *indefatigable*, as their Malice is *implacable.* Pſal. lix. 15.

Let me, from the ſame Compariſon, propoſe one Queſtion more; which may be applicable both to the Will and to the Underſtanding.—Should You hear of another Perſon, the State of whoſe Stomach was ſo diſpoſed, that it turned the moſt nouriſhing Food into Phlegm; and derived Matter of *Diſeaſe*, from the moſt ſovereign Supports of *Health*; what would You think of his Conſtitution?

Ther. I ſhould certainly think it very much diſtempered.

Aſp. Without the Grace of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*, our Souls turn *every* Occurrence into an Increaſe of their ſinful Depravity *. Our very Table is a Snare; and inſtead of exciting Us to Gratitude, is a Provocative to Gluttony.—How difficult is it, when We flow in Plenty, not to be elated; when We are preſſed with Poverty, not to repine!—Have We Buſineſs in the World? It cumbers our Thoughts, or tempts Us to Avarice. Have We no Buſineſs to manage? We ſink into Sloth, and ſettle on the Lees of Voluptuouſneſs.—If our Schemes are proſperous, it is odds but they attach Us to the Intereſts of Time. If they prove unſucceſsful, We too often are chagrined with the Diſappointment, and ſin againſt Meekneſs.—Even the holy Commandment, inſtead of reſtraining Sin, or producing Obedience, irritates the inbred Depravity; and renders it more reſtleſs, more impetuous, more ungovernable †.—Thoſe very *Things*, *which ſhould have been for our Welfare* (ſo malignant and raging is our Corruption!) *are* converted into *the Occaſion of falling*.

Ther.

* —— *Quodcunque infundis aceſcit.* HOR.

† Rom. vii. 8.

Ther. The Will is under no *Neceſſity* of miſemploying her Powers. She is *free* to act in this Manner or in that. And, if a Spendthrift, is not a Slave.

Aſp. In Actions which relate to the *animal* Oeconomy, the Will is unqueſtionably free. She can contract the Forehead into a Frown, or expand it with a Smile.—In the *ordinary* Affairs of Life, She is under no Controul. We can undertake or decline a Journey, carry on or diſcontinue an Employ, juſt as We pleaſe.—In the *outward* Acts of Religion alſo, the Will is her own Miſtreſs. We can read the Word of GOD, or go to the Place of divine Worſhip, without any extraordinary Aid from above.—But in Matters which are more intimately connected with our Salvation, the Caſe is widely different.

What ſays our famous old Poet *Spenſer?* Amidſt all his rich Fancy and bright Imagery, He ſpeaks as plainly upon this Subject, as *Theron*'s ſerious Friend.

Ne let the Man aſcribe it to his Skill,
That thorough Grace has got the Victory.
If any Strength We have, it is to Ill;
But all the Good is GOD's, the Power and the Will.

Ther. This wants Confirmation. More authentic Confirmation, than the fanciful Flights of a Poet.

Aſp. Would You have a Perſon delight Himſelf in the LORD; take pleaſure in Devotion; and ſet his Affections on Things above?—All this is both his Duty and his Intereſt. But alas! His In-

clinations gravitate the quite contrary Way. His Will is in the Condition of that diſtreſſed Woman, who was *bowed down with a Spirit of Infirmity, and could in no wiſe lift up Herſelf* *. Corruption, like a ſtrong Bias influences, or rather like a heavy Mountain oppreſſes his Mind. Neither can He ſhake off the Propenſity, or ſtruggle away from the Load: until Grace, almighty Grace, interpoſes for his Releaſe.—*Where the SPIRIT of the LORD is, there*, and there alone, *is Liberty* †; that ſacred and glorious Liberty, which is not the common Privilege of all Men, but the high Prerogative of the Children of GOD.

Would You have a Perſon apply to the great REDEEMER; apply with a real Ardor of Deſire; as *Bartimæus* of old, or the *Syrophœnician* Mother? Counting all Things but Dung, for the tranſcendent Excellency of *CHRIST?*—To do this, is to poſſeſs true Wiſdom; and the only Expedient, to acquire true Happineſs. But the human Will is like the withered Arm; cannot ſtretch forth itſelf to the all-gracious SAVIOUR: cannot hunger and thirſt after his everlaſting Righteouſneſs and infinite Merit: cannot do this, till the SAVIOUR Himſelf ſpeaks Power into the *enfeebled*, the *perverted* Faculty.—If You think otherwiſe; try the Experiment. Perſuade Men to this neceſſary Practice. Urge the moſt weighty Arguments: deviſe the moſt pathetic Expoſtulations: let Zeal exert all her Force, and Rhetoric employ all her Art. Without being a Prophet, I dare venture to foretel the Iſſue. Diſappointments, repeated Diſappointments, will convince You—That our Divine

* Luke xiii. 11. † 2 Cor. iii. 17.

vine MASTER knew what He said, when He solemnly declared; *No Man can come to Me, except the FATHER, which hath sent Me, draw Him* *. —That our Church has not taught Us to play the Hypocrite, when She teaches Us to confess; "We "be *tied* and *bound* with the Chain of our Sins."

Ther. Are We Slaves then? Will *Christianity* send Us to seek our Brethren, in the Mines or in the Gallies?

Asp. Christianity does not *send*, but *find* Us there. There, or in a worse Slavery †.—It is doubtless a most

* *John* vi. 44. It is not said, The FATHER *drives*, but *draws*: not by violent, irrational, compulsive Means; but by clear Conviction, sweet Persuasion, and Inducements suited to a reasonable Being. *Those* are the Cords of a Beast, *these* of a Man. So that We are not acted upon as Clock-work, or influenced as mere Machines, but *made willing* in the Day of his Power, *Psal.* cx. 3.—This Point is stated, with great Propriety, and equal Clearness, in our *tenth Article*. "The Con- "dition of Man, after the Fall of *Adam*, is such, that "He cannot turn and prepare Himself by his own na- "tural Strength and good Works, to Faith and calling "upon GOD. Wherefore, We have no Power to do "good Works, pleasant and acceptable to GOD, "without the Grace of GOD by *CHRIST* prevent- "ing Us, that We may have a good Will; and work- "ing with Us when We have that good Will."

† St. *Paul* says of *Christians*, and reckons Himself in the Number, that naturally they *served* (not δουλευομεν, but ἠμεν δουλοι, were absolute Slaves to) *divers Lusts and Pleasures*, Tit. iii. 3. The whole Verse is very remarkable, and nothing can be more apposite to *Aspasio*'s Purpose. It shews Us, What *They* were by Nature, who through Grace became living Images of the blessed GOD.

This mortifying Doctrine is often acknowledged by our Church. Thus begins one of her public Supplica-

moſt abject State, to wear the Yoke, and trudge in Chains. Yet ſuch, I apprehend, is the State of our Minds by Nature. To prove this, We need not go down to the loweſt Ranks of Life. *Theſe*, You might ſay with the Prophet, *are poor; theſe are foolish; they have not known the Way of the LORD, nor the Judgment of their GOD.—I will get me* therefore *to the great Men* *, and examine their Diſpoſition.

Have You not known Perſons of the greateſt Intrepidity, and firmeſt Reſolution, hurried away by their Luſts, as "a rolling Thing before the Whirl-"wind †?" Perhaps, they were bold enough to face Danger, and defy the Sword, in the Field of Battle. Yet, were no more able to renounce the wanton Allurements of Beauty, or the ſoft Solicitations of Pleaſure; than the *Moth* can forbear fluttering about the Flame, even though it ſinges her Wings, and is ſcorching her to death.—Others, poſſeſſed of a refined Imagination, diſdain the groſs Indulgencies of Senſuality; yet are Slaves to their own *domineering* Paſſions. They are blown into the moſt intemperate Rage, and puſhed on to the moſt extravagant Actions, by every little ruffling Accident. They ſee the *Meanneſs*, which ſuch an ungovernable Spirit argues; they feel the *Miſery*, which

tions; *Almighty GOD, who alone canſt order the unruly Wills and Affections of ſinful Man.* It ſeems, We cannot determine our own Wills, nor regulate our own Affections. What is this but Bondage?—What does this betoken? What does this imply?

——— *But lapſed Powers enthrall'd*
By Sin to foul exorbitant Deſires?

MILTON, Book III.

* Jer. v. 4, 5. † Iſai. xvii. 13.

which ſuch internal Tempeſts create: nay, they reſolve to ſuppreſs the Impetuoſity of their Temper. Yet, like a Feather bore away by the Torrent, they yield to the very firſt Provocation, and are as furiouſly reſentful as ever.—Will You call *theſe* Perſons free, becauſe their Taſk-maſters and their Tyrants are lodged within *? Becauſe the Fetters are forged, not for the meaner, but for the immortal Part of their Nature?

Ther. Let Us paſs to the *Affections*. Theſe are to the Soul, what Wings are to the Eagle, or Sails to the Ship. Theſe always ſtand ready, to catch the Gales of Intereſt, and to ſpring at the Signal of Reaſon.

Aſp. O! that they did!—But, if the Wings are clogged with Mire; if the Sails are diſproportioned to the Ballaſt; what Advantage will accrue, either to the Animal, or to the Veſſel?—The One will, probably, be overſet in the Voyage; the Other muſt lie groveling on the Ground.

Ther. Deſire ſeems to be the firſt, which "opens "the Mouth, or moves the Wing, or peeps †." Deſire is active as a Flame, and ever in Purſuit of Happineſs.

Aſp. What if your Flame, inſtead of ſhooting upwards, ſhould point its *inverted* Spires to the Earth? Would not this be ſtrange, and a Sign of great Diſorder?—GOD is the Center of Perfection, and the Source of Felicity. All that is amiable in itſelf, is comprehended in GOD. All that is beneficial to

* ——————*Intus & in Jecore ægro*
Naſcuntur Domini. PERS.

† Iſai. x. 14.

Us, proceeds from GOD. Do our Deſires uniformly *tend* to this ſuper-excellent Being? Do our Wiſhes *terminate* in the Enjoyment of his ever-glorious Majeſty? Alas! We are naturally eſtranged from Him: We covet no Communion with Him. We are wedded to Trifles, and dote upon Vanity. But *to GOD we ſay*—it is evidently the Language of our Conduct—*Depart from Us; We deſire not the Knowledge of thy Ways* *.

If Deſire is the Firſt-born among the Affections, obſerve it in Children. There it appears in its Dawn, and has moſt of pure Nature.—See, how thoſe *Flies*, exulting in the ſunny Gleam, vibrate with all the Rapidity of Motion their little Wings †. So prompt and expedite ‡, are the Deſires of Children, to any corrupting Diverſion.—See, how ſluggiſhly that *Snail*, crawling forth amidſt the refreſhing Moiſture, drags her ſlow Length along. So dull ‖, if not reluctant, are the Diſpoſitions of our Children, to any improving Exerciſe. Rewards will hardly win them to the latter; the Rod can hardly deter them from the former.—And None, None but GOD, "by his *ſpecial* Grace preventing them, can put "into their Minds good Deſires §."

Is

* Job xxi. 14.

† The Wings of a Fly are ſuppoſed to have the *quickeſt* Motion, of any material Subſtance which lives. And if they make, as Naturaliſts imagine, ſome Hundreds of Vibrations in a Second of Time, I think, there can be no Competition in the Caſe.

‡ This is what the *Greeks* call ἐκδρομία. Which, with a Propriety not to be equalled by any Tranſlation, expreſſes both the *Promptitude* of the Agent, and the *Iniquity* of the Action. *Acts* xiii. 10.

‖ Νωθροι γεγονατε. Heb. v. 11.

§ *Collect* for *Eaſter-Day*.

Is our *Love* under better Regulation?—How eaſily are We captivated with a fair Complexion and graceful Form; eſpecially, when ſet off with the Decorations of Dreſs. But how little affected with the Beauty of internal Character; with the Ornaments of Virtue, and the Graces of *Chriſtianity?* Can it be ſuppoſed, that the Pulſe of the Soul beats regularly; where there is ſuch a *paſſionate Fondneſs* for fading Embelliſhments, and ſuch a *cold Indifference* for the moſt ſubſtantial Endowments?—How eaſily are We ſmitten with Riches * and Splendour! How our Hearts dance under a Senſe of Diſtinction, Superiority, or Preferment! Yet how backward to love that infinitely loving and lovely REDEEMER, who would die Himſelf, rather than We ſhould become a Prey to Death! Tinder We are, perfect Tinder to the Sparks of irrational and diſſolute Affection. Harder than Adamant, colder than Ice, to this heavenly Flame.

Ther. If our Love is blind, our *Fear* has not loſt her Eyes. Fear is quick of Apprehenſion: and, inſtead of being ſtupidly inſenſible, is ready to "riſe "up at the Voice of a Bird †."

Aſp. The Paſſion of Fear is ſufficiently active, but deplorably *miſapplied.*—We fear the Reproach of Men. But are We alarmed at the View of that *everlaſting Shame*, which the LORD, the righteous Judge, ſhall pour upon the Ungodly? We ſhudder at the drawn Dagger, and ſtand appalled at the

* On this Account, becauſe We are naturally Lovers of Riches, of Pleaſure, and of the World, more than of GOD our SAVIOUR, the Scripture arraigns Us as *Adulterers and Adultereſſes.* James iv. 4.

† Eccleſ. xii. 4.

headlong Precipice. But how often have We defied the Sword of almighty Vengeance, and ſported upon the Brink of irretrievable Perdition?

Sin is the moſt pernicious of all Evils. Sin violates the divine Command, and provokes the Divine MAJESTY. Sin offers Deſpite to the Bleſſed SPIRIT, and tramples upon the Blood of JESUS. For Sin, the Tranſgreſſor is baniſhed from the bliſsful Preſence of GOD, and doomed to dwell with inextinguiſhable Burnings. Do We dread this *grand Deſtroyer* of our Happineſs? Dread it more than any Calamities, more than all Plagues?—Take one of thoſe fine May-dukes, which glow with ſuch an inviting Scarlet, on yonder Eſpalier. Offer it to the *Blackbird*, that ſerenades us from the neighbouring Elm. The Creature, though fond of the Dainty, will fly from your Hand, as haſtily as from a leveled Fowling-piece. He ſuſpects a Deſign upon his Liberty; and therefore will endure any Extremity, will even ſtarve to death, rather than taſte the *moſt tempting* Delicacy in ſuch hazardous Circumſtances.—Are We equally fearful of an infinitely greater Danger? Do We fly, with equal Solicitude *, from the deluſive but deſtructive Wiles of Sin? Alas! Do not We too often *ſwallow* the Bait, even when We plainly diſcover the fatal Hook? Do We not *ſnatch* the forbidden Fruit, though Conſcience remonſtrates; though GOD prohibits; though Death eternal threatens!

There-

* The *inſtigating* Admonition, tranſmitted to *Brutus* by an anonymous Letter, when the Papiſts had formed a Plot againſt his Life, ſhould be the Rule of our Conduct on ſuch an Occaſion; *Fuge! Fuge! cito—citius—citiſſimè.*

Ther. Conſcience then, according to your own Account, has eſcaped the general Shipwreck. Conſcience is GOD's Vicegerent in the Soul, and executes her Office faithfully. Even the Gentiles *ſhew the Work of the Law written in their Hearts, their Conſcience alſo bearing witneſs, and their Thoughts the mean while accuſing or elſe excuſing one another* *.

Aſp. If there be any Remains of the divine Image, perhaps, they are to be found in the Conſcience. But even this is not exempt from the common Ruin. —Conſider its *Light*. It is like a dim Taper, feebly glimmering; and juſt ſerving to make the Darkneſs viſible. Or, if it diſcovers, it diſcovers only an obſcure Something, We know not what. Which, inſtead of informing, tantalizes Us; and inſtead of guiding, bewilders Us. As falſe and deluſory Lights on the Shore, put a Cheat upon the Mariner; and, inſtead of directing Him to Safety, miſlead Him into Danger †.—Conſider its *Operations*. It is either dumb or dead, or both. *Dumb*; or elſe how vehemently would it upbraid Us, for our ſhocking Ingratitude to our Supreme Omnipotent BENEFACTOR?

* *Rom.* ii. 15. Methinks, I would not tranſlate the Word μεταξυ *the mean while*, but *alternately* or *interchangeably* accuſing or excuſing; ſometimes one, ſometimes the other; in Conformity to the different Circumſtances of their Temper and Behaviour.

† This ſeems to have been the Caſe with the *Heathen* World.—Conſcience arraigned, and found them guilty. This put them upon practiſing their *abominable*, ſometimes their *inhuman* Idolatries.—Nay, this induced them to invent and propagate the moſt impious Miſrepreſentations of the DEITY. That they might *ſheath* the Sting of Conſcience, and find ſome *Salvo* for their own Iniquities, they made even the Objects of their Worſhip, the *Patrons* and the *Precedents* of their favourite Vices.

FACTOR? How loudly would it inveigh against our ſtupid Neglect of ſpiritual Intereſts, and eternal Ages? *Dead*; otherwiſe how keenly would it ſmart, when gaſhed with Wounds—*numerous*, as our repeated Violations of the divine Law—*deep*, as the horrid Aggravations of our various Iniquities.

Ther. Do You call this an Anſwer to my Objection, *Aſpaſio?* If it be an Anſwer, it reſembles, in Point of ſatisfactory Evidence, the Light which You aſcribe unto the Conſcience.

Aſp. The *Gentiles*, We own, ſhew the *Work*, but not the *Love* of the Law, written on their Hearts. Some leading Notices of Right and Wrong they have: ſome ſpeculative Strictures of Good and Evil. But without a *real Abhorrence* of the One, or a *cordial Delight* in the Other. Which, far from ennobling their Nature, far from vindicating their Practice, argues the exceeding Depravity of the former, and renders the latter abſolutely without Excuſe.

No; You ſay, Conſcience *excuſes* the Heathens. Rather, their Conſcience *bears witneſs* to the Equity of the Law; while their Thoughts *make ſome* weak *Apology* *, for the Tenour of their Conduct. This is far from acquitting, far from juſtifying them.—Beſides, theſe weak Attempts to excuſe, are always founded on *Ignorance*. Did they know themſelves, their Duty, or their GOD, Conſcience would, without the leaſt Heſitation, bring in her Verdict, *Guilty*.

* The Word is ἀπολογεμενων, ſignifying the *Attempt* of an accuſed Perſon to vindicate Himſelf; not συμμαρτυρεντων, the *Depoſition* of a Witneſs, atteſting his Innocence; much leſs δικαιωσαντων, the *Sentence* of a Judge, pronouncing Him upright.

Guilty.—The Apoſtle aſſures Us, that, till Faith, which is a divine Principle, takes place in our Breaſts, *both the Mind and Conſcience are defiled* *. Here, and elſewhere, plainly intimating; that the Conſcience is evil, and ever will be evil, till it is *ſprinkled with the Blood of CHRIST* †.

It *accuſes* ſome, and it ought to accuſe, yea, to condemn All ‡. But even Here it evidences itſelf to be corrupt. For, its Accuſations are ſometimes *erroneous* ‖, and no better than falſe Witneſs; ſometimes *partial* §, and ſuborned by Appetite; and very,

* Tit. i. 15. † Heb. x. 22.

‡ The Apoſtle, I think, intimates as much, in the very peculiar Turn of his Expreſſion, η και απολογουμενων, accuſing *or even apologizing*. As though the latter was a *ſtrange Act*; quite unexpected, and utterly unreaſonable, in Creatures altogether become abominable.

‖ *Erroneous*—What elſe was that grand Article in the Accuſations of Conſcience, mentioned, with ſuch particular Diſtinction, by *Virgil*;

———Phlegyaſque miſerrimus omnes
Admonet, & magnâ teſtatur Voce per Umbras,
Diſcite Juſtitiam moniti, & non temnere Divos.

For Men to *deſpiſe* ſuch dunghil, worſe than dunghil Deities, had been their *Virtue* if done, and was their *Duty* to do.—What elſe was that Voice of Conſcience, mentioned by our LORD, *John* xvi. 2. or that, confeſſed by the Apoſtle, *Acts* xxvi. 9.

§ *Partial*—Otherwiſe, how could the moſt celebrated among the antient Heroes applaud and practiſe, that execrable Crime, *Self-murder?*—How could their firſt-rate Hiſtorians extol and almoſt conſecrate, that diabolical Principle of Action, *Pride?*—How could their ableſt Teachers of Morality, not only tolerate, but eſtabliſh the Error, by neglecting to find ſo much as a Name for that amiable Virtue, *Humility?* Or, which is ſtill worſe, by uſing the Word to ſignify a *diſingenuous ſordid* Practice.

and

very, very often *ineffectual*.—Nay, when they do take Effect, they produce no Fruit that is truly good. They work not a genuine Humiliation; or an unfeigned Repentance; but either a slavish Dread of GOD, as a severe Judge; or Hatred of Him, as an inexorable Enemy.

Ther. Hatred of GOD—Astonishing Impiety! Is it possible for the human Heart to admit such enormous, almost incredible Wickedness?

Asp. You may well be astonished, *Theron*; and GOD may justly demand; *What Iniquity have my People found in me, that they are gone far from me* * ? "I created them out of Nothing, and endowed "them with an immortal Soul. As a Father, I "have provided for them. As a Nurse, I have "cherished them.—I have given them the Earth, "and the Fulness thereof, for their present Accom-"modation. I have prepared Heaven, and its un-"speakable Happiness, for their future Enjoyment. "All my Creatures do them Service, and even "my Angels minister unto their Good.—Do they "desire greater Demonstrations of my Love? I "have given, what was dearer to me than all "Angels, than all Worlds. I have given my "SON from my Bosom, to die in their Stead.— "Would they have farther Evidences of my dis-"tinguished Regard? Behold! I touch the Moun-"tains, and they smoke: I look upon the Earth, "and it trembles: I cast even the Princes of Hea-"ven, when they break my Law, into Chains of "Dark-

and an *abject dastardly* Spirit. *Quæ omnia, partim infamia, partim* humilia, *atque ab Honestate remota.* Corn. Nep. in Præf. Οπως αν ταπεινοτατοι και ευκαθεκτοτατοι ειν. Xenoph. De Inst. Cyr. Lib. vii.

* Jer. ii. 5.

"Darkneſs. But to diſobedient and rebellious "Men, I condeſcend to act as a Supplicant. "Though highly injured, and horribly affronted, "I beſeech them—again and again I beſeech them,—"ſaying, BE YE RECONCILED TO GOD."

To hate * *ſuch* a GOD, is indeed the moſt deteſtable Impiety, almoſt incredible Wickedneſs. Yet Man, fooliſh Man, practiſes this Impiety, whenever, for the Sake of a vile Luſt, an ignoble Pleaſure, or an unruly Paſſion, He tranſgreſſes the Command of his CREATOR.

Shall I exemplify the Doctrine, in another of the Affections?

Ther. In Truth, *Aſpaſio*, I begin to be ſick of the Subject. If human Nature is ſo ulcerated, the leſs You touch it the better.—However, let us not quite omit the *iraſcible* Appetite.

Aſp. Of this We have already taken a Side-view; if You chooſe to ſee it in fuller Proportion, make your Obſervation on *Fervidus*.—*Fervidus* comes home in a Rage. See his fierce indignant Eye! Mark his wild irregular Gait! Now, his Cheek kindles into Flame; in a Moment, it is pale as the Corpſe. His Lips quiver, and Words are half choaked in their Utterance. Yet, though He can hardly ſpeak, He vows Revenge, and utters Imprecations.—What, I beſeech You, is the Cauſe of all this wondrous Ferment? Why truly, a Neighbour

* Hatred of GOD is ſo *ſhocking* an Expreſſion, that one would almoſt wiſh, never to hear or read it. But it occurs in our unerring Book; is too often exemplified in common Life; and is engraven by corrupt Nature on every human Heart. See *Rom.* i. 30. *Exod.* xx. 5. *John* xv. 25. *Rom.* viii. 7.

bour has dropt ſome reflecting Hint, or a Servant has blundered in ſome trifling Meſſage. Such Uſage, *Fervidus* ſays, is intolerable; and ſuch Negligence unpardonable.—This ſame *Fervidus* has offered numberleſs Affronts to his MAKER; He has moſt ſcandalouſly neglected the Will of his Almighty LORD; yet feels no Indignation againſt *Himſelf*. —He is all Fury, when his own Credit is touched. But when the Intereſt of *CHRIST* is wounded, He can ſit unconcerned, or paſs it off with a Laugh. —Anger, I acknowledge, is ſometimes becoming and uſeful. But is *this* its right Temperature? *This* its proper Application?

Ther. This is the Practice only of ſome few turbulent and boiſterous Spirits. To ſaddle *their* Qualities upon *every* Perſon, is a Procedure juſt as equitable, as the Madman's * Calculation was reaſonable; who took an Account of every Ship, which entered the Harbour, and ſet it down for his own.

Aſp. The latter Part of my Charge, I fear, is applicable to more than a few.—However, let Us conſider the moſt *calm* and *ſedate* Minds. How are they affected under Injuries? Do they never aggravate Failings into Crimes? Do they find it eaſy to abſtain from every Emotion of Ill-will? Eaſy to love their Enemies, and do Good to Thoſe who hate them? Theſe godlike Tempers, if our Nature was not degenerated, would be the *ſpontaneous* Produce of the Soul. But now, alas! they are not raiſed, without much Difficulty; ſeldom come to any conſiderable Degree of Eminence; never arrive at a State of true Perfection. An undoubted Proof, that they are *Exotics*, not *Natives* of the Soil.

Now

* *Thraſylus*, an *Athenian*.

Now We are ſpeaking of Plants, caſt your Eye upon the Kitchen-garden. Many of thoſe Herbs, will perfume the *hard* Hand, which cruſhes them; and embalm the *rude* Foot, which tramples on them. Such was the benign Conduct of our LORD. He always overcame Evil with Good. When his Diſciples diſregarded Him, in his bitter Agony, He made the *kindeſt* Excuſe for their ungrateful Stupidity *. When his Enemies, with unparalleled Barbarity, ſpilt his very Blood; He *pleaded* their Ignorance, as an Extenuation of their Guilt †.—Is the ſame Spirit in Us, which was alſo in our Divine MASTER? Then are our Paſſions rightly poiſed, and duly tempered. But if Reſentment kindles, and Animoſity rankles in our Hearts; this is an infallible Sign, that We ſwerve from our SAVIOUR's Pattern; conſequently, are fallen from our primitive Rectitude.

Ther. What ſay You of the *Fancy?* This ſure, if no other Faculty, retains the primitive Rectitude. What Pictures does ſhe form, and what Excurſions does ſhe make? She can dive to the Bottom of the Ocean; can ſoar to the Height of the Stars; and walk upon the Boundaries of Creation.

Aſp. That the Fancy is lively and excurſive, I readily grant. It can out-travel the Poſt, or out-fly the Eagle. But if it travel, only to pick *Shells*; or fly abroad, to bring home *Miſchief*; then, I apprehend, though You ſhould admire the Faculty, You will hardly be in Raptures with its Agency.—This is the real Truth. Our Fancy, till divine Grace regulate and exalt its Operations, is generally employed in picking painted Shells, or culling venomous Herbs.

* Matt. xxvi. 41. † Luke xxiii. 34.

Herbs. *Weaving* (as the Prophet very elegantly, and no leſs exactly deſcribes the Caſe) *the Spider's Web, or hatching Cockatrice Eggs* *. Buſied in the moſt abſurd Impertinencies; or acting in Speculation, the vileſt Iniquities. That, which ſhould be *a Garden incloſed, a Fountain ſealed* †, for the PRINCE of Peace, is the Thoroughfare of Vanity.—And even when We are renewed from above, O! how neceſſary is it, to keep an inceſſant Watch, and exerciſe a ſtrict Diſcipline, over this volatile, variable, treacherous *Vagrant!*

The *Memory*, as well as the Fancy, is impaired; or, if not impaired, is debauched. Why elſe does it ſo firmly *retain* the Impreſſions of an Injury, but ſo eaſily *let ſlip* the Remembrance of a Benefit? Any idle Fopperies, which ſooth our Vanity, and increaſe our Corruption, cleave to the Thoughts, as the vexatious Burr to our Clothes. While the noble Truths of the Goſpel, and the rich Mercies of a gracious GOD, ſlide away from the Mind (as Water from the Feathers of a Swan) and leave no laſting Trace behind them. This double Perverſeneſs is very emphatically, and too truly repreſented by *Jeremiah*; *Can a Maid forget her Ornaments, or a Bride her Attire? Yet my People have forgotten me, Days without number* ‡.—If We hear a looſe Hint, or read an immodeſt Expreſſion, they are almoſt ſure to faſten themſelves on our Memory. If ſhaken off, they follow Us with a troubleſome Importunity. If excluded, as unwelcome Viſitants, they force themſelves, again and again, upon our Imagination. They dog Us to the Cloſet; they haunt our moſt retired Hours; and too often diſturb our very Devotions.

* Iſai. lix. 5. † Cant. iv. 12. ‡ Jer. ii. 32.

nations.—Tell me now, can that Faculty be upright and uncorrupted, which is a *perforated Sieve*, to transmit the Beneficial; but a *thirsty Sponge*, to imbibe the Pernicious *.

Theo. Well, my Friend, whatever Guilt I or Others have contracted, *Flattery*, I dare be positive, is none of yours. Human Nature has received no heightening or adulatory Touches from your Pencil. You have pourtrayed Her *foolish* and *beastly*, and every Thing bad but *deviliſh*.

Aſp. And this, even this Abomination, I muſt not ſecrete, I dare not except.—*Envy* is a deviliſh Diſpoſition. It ſubſiſts no where, but in damned Spirits, and fallen Souls. Yet, infernal as it is, it has been found in Perſons of the moſt exalted Character. The magnanimous *Joſhua* felt its cancrous Tooth †. The Diſciples of the bleſſed *JESUS* were ſoured with its malignant Leaven ‡. An Apoſtle declares, that *the Spirit which dwelleth in Us luſteth to Envy* ‖; is impetuouſly prone to that deteſtable Temper.

Lying is confeſſedly a diabolical Practice. Yet, how unaccountably forward are our Children, to utter Falſhood? As ſoon as they are born, they go

* This Remark ſuggeſts a ſolid Confutation of that ſpecious Argument, frequently uſed in Behalf of ſome *faſhionable* but *diſſolute* Diverſions. "They are interſperſed, ſay their Admirers, with Sentiments of Virtue, and Maxims of Morality."—Should We admit the Truth of this Plea; yet the depraved Diſpoſition of Mankind, is pretty ſure to drop the Morality, and carry away the Ribaldry.

——————— *Dociles imitandis*
Turpibus ac pravis omnes ſumus.

† Numb. xi. 29. ‡ Matt. xx. 24. ‖ James iv. 5.

aſtray; and as ſoon as they ſpeak, they ſpeak Lies! —I ſaid *unaccountably*. But I recal the Expreſſion: The Cauſe is evident. They have loſt the Image of the GOD of Truth; and are become like that apoſtate Spirit, who *is a Lyar, and the Father of it* *.

What think You of *Malice*, of *Hate*, and *Revenge*? Are they not each a Species of Murder, and the Seed of the old Serpent? Unleſs, therefore, We are entirely free from all theſe helliſh Emotions, We muſt, *We muſt* acknowledge, that the Prince of this World † has his Party within Us. May the Almighty Hand of our GOD extirpate and ſubdue it, Day by Day!

You tell me, I am *no Flatterer*.—Should a Perſon, who profeſſes Himſelf the Friend of his Fellow-creatures, ſoothe them into a *falſe* Peace? Should He bolſter them up in a *groundleſs* Conceit of their Excellency, when they really are no better than "an "unclean Thing?"—Shall the Surgeon aſſure his Patient, "All is well;" even when the Mortification has taken place, and the Gangrene is ſpreading? This were to refine the firſt out of all Benevolence, and to flatter the laſt into his Grave.

A Diſputant of leſs Complaiſance than my *Theron*, would probably aſk, with a contemptuous Sneer; "Have You then been drawing your own Picture?" —To Whom I would reply, with Confuſion and Sorrow, "I have." Alledging this only, to moderate *my Confuſion*; That I am daily ſeeking, by Prayer and Watchfulneſs, more and more *to put off this old Man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful Luſts* ‡. And, to alleviate *my Sorrow*, I am endeavouring continually to remember; That, however unworthy

I

* John viii. 44. † John xiv. 30. ‡ Eph. iv. 22.

I am, however vile I may have been, my adored REDEEMER's Righteousness is perfect; and in *this* Righteousness every Believer is to make his Boast.

Ther. So then Man is blind in his Understanding; perverse in his Will; disorderly in his Affections; influenced by Dispositions, which are partly brutal, and partly diabolical.—I have often heard You extol, in Terms of high Admiration, the Virtue of *Humility*. You have lavished all the Riches of Eloquence, when haranguing on Poverty of Spirit. If *such* be the Condition of Mankind, they have infinite Cause to be poor in Spirit. They must, therefore, have *one* Excellency left; and according to your own Account, a very distinguishing one.

Asp. Scarce any Thing displays, in a more glaring Light, the extreme Depravity of Man, than his strong Propensity to *Pride*; notwithstanding so much Vileness, and so many Deformities.—Should the noisome Leper admire the *Beauty* of his Complexion, or the impotent Paralytic glory in the *Strength* of his Sinews; would they not be mistaken, even to a Degree of Sottishness and Frenzy? Yet, for Man, fallen Man, who has lost his original Righteousness, which was the true Ornament of his Nature; who is become subject to base and sordid Lusts, or, as the Apostle speaks, *is earthly and sensual*—for *Him* to be proud, is still more absurdly wicked. And since this is the Case, I cannot acquit Him from the last and heaviest Article of the sacred Writer's Charge; I have a fresh and more convincing Proof, that We do Him no Wrong, when We call his Nature, his Disposition, his *Wisdom—devilish* *.

* James iii. 15.

Ther. Why do You reckon Pride an univerſally prevailing Corruption? I ſee no Ground for ſuch a diſhonourable Suſpicion. I hope, I *myſelf* am an Inſtance of the contrary. To unguarded Sallies of Paſſion, to ſeveral other Faults, I confeſs myſelf ſubject. But cannot think, that I am proud.

Aſp. Ah! *Theron*, if You was not proud, You would not be paſſionate. Unreaſonable Anger always proceeds from an over-weening Opinion of our own Worth.—One who, beſides his acquired Knowledge of human Nature, had the ſupernatural Gift of diſcerning Spirits, is obſerved to join *Humility* and *Meekneſs* *. Intimating, that they are amiable Twins; and where the former exiſts, the latter cannot be abſent.—Always conſiſtent with Himſelf, He links together the oppoſite Vices, *heady and high-minded* †: not obſcurely hinting, that thoſe who are eaſily provoked, are certainly proud.—Shall I add, without Offence? If we fanſy our Minds to be clear from the Weeds of Vanity, and our Thoughts free from the Workings of Self-admiration; it is a moſt pregnant Symptom, that We are *over-run* with the firſt; are *abandoned* to the laſt; and *blinded* by both.

Pride was the firſt Sin, that found Entrance into our Nature; and it is, perhaps, the laſt that will be expelled.—What are all our Afflictions, but a Remedy provided for this inveterate Diſeaſe? Intended to *hide Pride* ‡ *from Man*. What is the Inſtitution of

* *Eph.* iv. 2. The ſame Connection is made by our LORD; *Learn of ME, for I am meek and lowly.*

† 2 *Tim.* iii. 4. In the ſame Strain ſpeaks *Iſaiah*; *His Pride and his Wrath.* Chap. xvi. 6.

‡ Job xxxiii. 17.

of the Gospel, but a Battery erected against this Strong-hold of Satan? Ordained to *cast down every high Imagination* *.—Though that Remedy is often applied, though this Battery is continually playing; yet the peccant Humour is not entirely purged off, nor the Elatement of Spirit totally subdued, till *Mortality is swallowed up of Life*.

Pride is the Sin, which most easily besets Us. *Who can say, I have made my Heart clean* † from this Iniquity? It defiles our Duties, and intermingles itself with our very Virtues. It starts up, I know not how, in our most solemn Hours, and our most sacred Employs.—The good *Hezekiah*, whose Prayers were more powerful than all the Forces of *Sennacherib*, was not Proof against the Wiles of this subtle Sorceress ‡. Even the holy Apostle, who had been caught up into the third Heavens, was in Danger of being *puffed up* with Pride. In such great Danger, that it was necessary to put a Lancet into the gathering Tumour; or, as He Himself expresses it, to fix a *Thorn in his Flesh* ‖, and permit the *Messenger of Satan to buffet Him*.

How

* 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. † Prov. xx. 9. ‡ 2 Chron. xxxii. 25.

‖ 2 Cor. xii. 7. This Thorn has given as much Perplexity to the Commentators, as it gave Pain to the Apostle. Some have found paralytic Symptoms in the Passage, with ridiculous Distortions of the Countenance. Some have felt a violent Head-ach, or a grievous nephritic Disease. Others have been pestered with, or rather dreamt of, I know not what importunate Lusts.

To me the Sense is perfectly clear, and seems fully explained by the Apostle Himself.—The Thorn was *in the Flesh*; a Tribulation that affected, not his spiritual, but his bodily State.—It was inflicted by *a Messenger of Satan*;

How pathetically is this Corruption lamented, and how truly described, by "a sweet Singer of "our *Israel!*"

But Pride, that busy Sin,
Spoils all that I perform.
Curs'd Pride! that creeps securely in,
And swells a haughty Worm.

Thy Glories I abate,
Or praise Thee with Design;
Part of thy Favours I forget,
Or think the Merit mine.

The

tan; by persecuting Zealots, who were the Emissaries and Agents of Hell; whom *Satan* instigated to harrass and torment this eminent Minister of *CHRIST*.—In what it consisted, the tenth Verse declares; in *Reproaches*, *Necessities*, *Persecutions*, *Distresses*. These were the *Infirmities*, these the Calamities, which, at the first Onset, startled and shocked the unexperienced Soldier; from which He *thrice*, or repeatedly, prayed to be delivered: but with which the Wisdom of GOD saw it proper, to have Him almost continually exercised. These are what He means by (κολαφίζη) the ignominious and painful *Buffetings*. In short; these both pointed the Thorn, and planted it in his Flesh.

The *illative* Particles ὅτε, διὸ, and the comparative Adverb μᾶλλον, I think, not only *countenance*, but *require* this Interpretation. *q. d.* "*Therefore*, since the divine Grace "will be sufficient for me; enable me to improve from, "and triumph over, the sharpest Trials: since, in accom"plishing this, the Strength and Power of *CHRIST* "will be illustriously displayed: I will, henceforward, "*rather* welcome than dread, rather acquiesce in than "deprecate, the afflictive Circumstances.—Since this "Thorn is made to bear Fruit so advantageous to my"self, and so honourable to my SAVIOUR, it shall "no longer be the Subject of my Complaint, but of my "Complacency (εὐδοκῶ;) and the Cause, not of my Re"gret, but of my Glorying (καυχήσομαι.)"

The very Songs I frame,
Are faithleſs to thy Cauſe;
And ſteal the Honours of thy Name,
To build their own Applauſe *.

Ther. Now, I preſume, You have given the laſt Touches to your diſtorted Pourtrait.

Aſp. There are other diſagreeable and ſhocking Features. But thoſe I ſhall caſt into Shades, or hide under a Veil. One Particular You muſt allow me to add; which, like a ſullen Air in the Countenance, throws aggravated Horror over the Whole. I mean, An Inclination to be *fond of* our *Slavery*.—Do You remember the Story of *Demaratus*, the *Lacedemonian* Prince?

Ther. Being depoſed by his Countrymen, and baniſhed from *Sparta*, He was conſtrained to ſeek Protection in the *Perſian* Court. For a while He might ſeem reconciled to his Vaſſalage, and ſuppreſs the *Spartan* in his Breaſt. But when He beheld *Leonidas* and his gallant Troops preparing to defend the Paſs of *Thermopylæ*, He could diſguiſe Himſelf no longer. The Tears trickled down his Cheeks. He bitterly lamented his diſhonourable Situation. He extolled the *Grecians* to *Xerxes*'s Face; and longed to join thoſe brave Patrons of Liberty. But was detained, ſtill detained, by his hard Circumſtances, among the vile Stipendaries of Tyranny †.

Aſp. Yes; in this Inſtance, and in others, *the captive Exile haſteth to be looſed* ‡. But We alas!

* WATTS's *Hor. Lyr.*

† The generous Spirit, but calamitous Fate, of this royal Exile, are finely deſcribed in Mr. GLOVER's *Leonidas*, Book III.

‡ Iſai. li. 14.

We prefer Bondage to Freedom, and are loth to leave our Prison.—Of this, our Backwardness to *Self-examination* *, is both a Consequence and a Proof.—Self-examination, under the Agency of the blessed SPIRIT, would open a Window in our Dungeon; would shew Us our wretched Condition, and teach Us to sigh for Deliverance.—Why have We such a Dislike of *Reproof?* Because We hug our Chains, and choose Darkness rather than Light. Reproof is more grating than the harshest Discord; though it tends to dissolve the Enchantment, and rescue Us from the Tyranny of Sin. While *Flattery*, which abets the Delusion, and strengthens the Spell, is Music to our Ears.—Is not our *Reason*, which should arraign and condemn every Irregularity, forward to invent Excuses, and to spare the favourite Folly? Reason, which should unsheath the *Dagger*, superinduces the *Mask*; and, instead of striking at the Heart of our Vices, screens them under the Cover of some plausible Names. A wicked Habit is called a human Infirmity; insnaring Diversions pass for innocent Amusements; a revengeful Disposition is termed Spirit, Gallantry, and Honour. Thus our Reason (if, when so egregiously perverted, it deserves the Name) is ingenious to obstruct our Recovery; and *rivets* on the Shackles, which our Passions have formed †.

This

* ——— *Nemo in sese descendere, Nemo Cogitat.* PERS.

† Perhaps, this is what our LORD means, when, developing the human Heart, and discovering its latent Enormities, He closes the dark Account with ἀφροσύνη, *Foolishness*: implying that *Stupidity*, which has no Sense of

This the eternal WISDOM foreſaw, and therefore uttered that tender Expoſtulation; *How long, ye ſimple Ones will Ye* love *Simplicity, and Scorners* delight *in their Scorning, and Fools* hate *Knowledge?* Even the ineſtimably precious Knowledge of an all-atoning and completely juſtifying SAVIOUR; who preaches, who has purchaſed, and who works Deliverance—preaches in his Word, has purchaſed by his Blood, and works by his SPIRIT, Deliverance for the Captives—the wretched Captives of Ignorance, Sin, and Death *.

This I take to be the moſt *flagrant* and *deplorable* Effect of human Depravity—our Averſion to the Doctrine, the Privileges, the Grace of the Goſpel. Beware, my dear Friend, leſt You prove my Point by—ſhall I ſpeak it? Would You ſuſpect it?—your own Practice. Zealous as I am for my Tenets, I ſhould be ſorry, extremely ſorry, to have *ſuch* a Demonſtration of their Truth.

Ther. You are highly obliging, *Aſpaſio*, to ſingle *me* out for your Evidence. Yet why ſhould the Honour be appropriated to myſelf? It belongs, upon the Foot of the preceding Calculation, not to your Friend only, but to the whole Species.—If You was aiming at None but the Licentious and Abandoned, You would have None to oppoſe You, but Perſons of that Character. Your Arrows of Satire, would then be rightly leveled, and might be ſerviceable to Mankind. Whereas, to put *All* in the black Liſt; to mark *All* with the Villain's Brand; this can never

of its Miſery; that *Perverſeneſs*, which has no Deſire of a Recovery. Both which render all the other Evils far more inveterate. *Mark* vii. 22.

* Luke iv. 18.

ver be *Chriſtian* Charity; this is unſufferable Cenſoriouſneſs.

Aſp. Let me beſeech You, *Theron*, not to miſapprehend my Deſign. I ſpeak not as a malevolent Satiriſt, but wonld imitate the faithful Phyſician. I am opening the Sore, that it may admit the healing Balm: and ſhould I perform the Operation with an *envenomed* Inſtrument? My Soul abhors the Thought.—I muſt entreat You likewiſe to remember the Diſtinction, between a State of Nature, and a State of Grace. We are all naturally evil. *The World*, ſays the Apoſtle—leſt We ſhould imagine, that the Charge is advanced only againſt ſome abandoned Wretches, He enlarges the Indictment; He renders it univerſal—*the whole World*; not barely ſlips by Inadvertence into a ſingle Sin, or falls through Infirmity into frequent Miſcarriages, but *lieth in Wickedneſs* *. As the Ax-head, mentioned by the ſacred Hiſtorian, lay all torpid and ſluggiſh at the Bottom of *Jordan* †. In this miſerable Condition We ſhould remain; yes, ever remain, did not a *ſupernatural* Power *work in Us both to will and to do*; ſomewhat like that Power which cauſed the ponderous Iron to riſe in the Water, and ſwim on the Surface.

It is this ſupernatural Power, which makes ſome to differ, both from their original Selves, and from the Generality of their Neighbours.—Are they refined in their Temper, and reformed in their Life?

I

* 1 *John* v. 19. Κειται, *lieth*, as a Babe in its Swadling-cloaths, without any *Inclination* to riſe; κειμενον εν φαλνη. Luke ii. 12.—as a Corpſe on the Field of Battle, without any *Ability* to riſe; ὁ δ' επι χθονι κειτο τανυσθεις. Iliad. Υ.

† 2 Kings vi. 6.

I grant it. But then it is not any Ability of their own, it is the Influence of the ſanctifying SPIRIT, which purges away their Droſs; yet not without leaving *ſome Alloy*.

Ther. Here, *Aſpaſio*, You certainly ſtrain the Bow, till it breaks. Since Scripture itſelf celebrates ſome Perſons, as abſolutely perfect.—What ſays *Moſes*, the inſpired Hiſtorian? *Noah was perfect in his Generation* *.—What ſays the GOD of *Moſes*, who can neither deceive, nor be deceived? *Job was a perfect Man and an upright* †.—Conſequently, *their* Nature muſt be entirely cleanſed from this hereditary Defilement; and *their* Character confutes your derogatory Repreſentations of Mankind.

Aſp. Thoſe eminent Saints were perfect. That is, they were *ſanctified throughout*. Sanctified in all their Faculties. No one Grace of Religion was lacking. As in the new-born Infant, there is a human Creature complete: no conſtituent Part of the vital Frame is wanting: though each is tender; all are very feeble; and none arrived at the full Size.

They were *upright*. This Word ſeems to be explanatory of the preceding; and ſignifies an unfeigned Deſire, joined with a hearty Endeavour, to obey the whole Will of GOD: excluding, not all Defect, but all *prevailing* Hypocriſy, and *wilful* Remiſſneſs.—The Interpretation, thus limited, is of a Piece with their Conduct. If ſtretched to a higher Pitch, it is evidently inconſiſtent with the Narrative of their Lives.

Pray, what was your Motive, for decorating the ſilvan Retirement (which ſheltered Us Yeſterday) with the Statue of *Elijah*? *Ther.*

* Gen. vi. 9. † Job i. 1.

Ther. Because I thought, his solitary Life, and gloomy Temper, suited that sequestered Bower. Because the memorable Adventure, there represented, is, with me, a favourite Portion of sacred History.

Are We pleased with spirited and delicate *Raillery?* Nothing exceeds his pungent Sarcasm, on the stupid and despicable Dupes of Idolatry. Every Sentence is keen as a Razor, and pointed as a Dagger, yet wears the Appearance of the most courtly Complaisance. We may truly say, in the beautiful Language of the Psalmist, *His Words are smoother than Oil, and yet be they very Swords* *.

Are We delighted with Instances of *Magnanimity?* A single Prophet, unsupported by any human Aid, maintains the Cause of Truth, against the King, his Grandees, and hundreds of the apostate Priests. He ventures to stake all his Credit, to risk his very Life, and (what was dearer to Him than personal Credit, or bodily Life) the Honour of the true GOD, and Interests of his holy Religion—to risk all on the *immediate* Interposition of a most surprising Miracle.

Do We admire the Triumphs of *Faith?* His Faith was, in a manner, omnipotent. He prays, and *Torrents* of *Fire* descend from the Sky, to devour his Adversaries †.—He prays again, and the Sluices of Heaven are *shut*; there is neither Dew nor Shower for several Years ‡.—A third Time He prays, and the Windows from on High are *opened*;

Abuh-

* 1 *Kings* xviii. 27. And it came to pass at Noon, that *Elijah* mocked them, and said; *Cry aloud; for He is a God. Either He is talking, or He is pursuing, or He is in a Journey, or peradventure He sleepeth, and must be awaked.*

† 2 Kings i. 10. ‡ 1 Kings xvii. 1.

Abundance of Rain waters the Earth *.—On another Occasion, He presents his Supplications, and GOD makes his Feet like Harts Feet. Insomuch that an aged Prophet *outruns* the royal Chariot †.

Asp. I commend your Taste, *Theron:* and am particularly pleased with the Reasons of your Choice. —But do not you remember, that even the Wonder-working *Tishbite* failed in his Resignation, and failed in his Faith? Eminent as He was for Mortification, He gave way to *unreasonable* Discontent; and, though a Champion for the living GOD, He yielded to *unbelieving Fear* ‡.—*The Man Moses was very meek, above all the Men which were upon the Face of the Earth* ‖: Yet He, even He was provoked in his Spirit, and spake unadvisedly with his Lips §. —Was not *Peter* the Hero among our LORD's Followers? Yet He trembles, more than trembles, at the Shaking of a Leaf; He denies his Divine MASTER, feared by the Voice of a Woman.

Look where-ever We will, We find Proofs of human Depravity; reigning *uncontrouled* in Some, making frequent *Insurrection* in All. It is written on our own Hearts, by the Pen of Experience; the Finger

* James v. 17, 18. † 1 Kings xviii. 46.

‡ *Elias*, or rather *Elijah*, *was a Man subject to like Passions as We are.* James v. 17. Upon which Passage, an eminent Commentator makes the following Remark; "This probably is said, with respect to his *Fear* and *Discontent*, manifested 1 *Kings* xix. 3, 4.—ὁμοιοπαθὴς must, I think, imply a State, liable to the *irregular* Workings of Passion; not free from the *sinful* Infirmities of Nature. Otherwise, it is an Instance foreign to the Purpose; does by no means answer the End designed; which is to encourage the Heart, and strengthen the Faith, even of *frail, corrupt, offending* Creatures. See *Ver.* 16.

‖ Numb. xii. 3. § Psal. cvi. 33.

Finger of Obſervation points it out, in the Practice of Others.—Even in the Practice of *Thoſe*, who have been Saints of the firſt Rank, and of the higheſt Endowments. Yet they were defective.—Defective too, in *that very* Quality, which was their diſtinguiſhing Gift; in which they particularly excelled.

Ther. While We are talking, the Day has inſenſibly ſtole itſelf away, and left Us ſurrounded with *Twilight*. Which is a Sort of Luſtre intermingled with Darkneſs: no Part wholly lucid; no Part wholly obſcure.—An Emblem, according to your Repreſentation, of the renewed Soul, and its imperfect Holineſs.

Aſp. A very juſt one.—Even where the Goſpel ſhines, ſtill there is an *intercurrent* Gloom of Corruption. Ignorance mixes itſelf with our Knowledge. Unbelief cleaves to our Faith. Nor is our Purity free from all Contamination.—The Prophet *Zechariah*, foretelling the Eſtabliſhment of the Goſpel Kingdom, and deſcribing the State of its ſpiritual Subjects, ſays; *It ſhall come to paſs in that Day, that the Light ſhall not be clear, nor dark* *. This, as to its

* *Zech.* xiv. 6, 7. This Paſſage ſeems to be one of the *δυσνοητα*, *Things difficult to be underſtood.* Therefore, I may be pardoned for an Attempt to clear up the Meaning; and not ſeverely cenſured, even though I ſhould miſcarry in the Attempt. *It ſhall come to paſs in that Day, there ſhall not be Light*, full, unintermitted, and ſtrong; *but now Effulgence* (יקרות *Preciouſneſs*, ſee *Job* xxxi. 26.) and Clearneſs of Viſion, *anon Obſcurity* (קפאון *Coagulatio, Denſity*) and Dimneſs of Viſion. *Yet it ſhall be one*, real, determinate *Day*; whoſe Duration, whoſe Properties, and all whoſe Circumſtances, are *known to the LORD.* Thus much He hath graciouſly revealed by his Prophet, that, during the firſt Periods of this wonderful

its *literal* Senſe, We now ſee exemplified in the circumambient Atmoſphere. With regard to its *ſpiritual* Meaning, every true Believer feels it accompliſhed in his own Breaſt.

Ther. While You are ſo vehement, in decrying all human Attainments; conſider, *Aſpaſio*, whether You do not *check* and *diſpirit* Us, in the Purſuit of exalted Virtue.

Aſp. I ſuppoſe, You never expected to be ſuch an Adept in Geometry as *Archimedes*, nor ſo profound an Aſtronomer as *Newton*; yet this did not check your Application to the Study of Mathematics, or the Contemplation of the Heavens.—Your Brother the Merchant, I preſume, has no Proſpect of amaſſing the Wealth of a *Cræſus*, or the immenſe Treaſures of a *Kouli-Khan* *; yet this does not diſpirit Him in proſecuting the Buſineſs, which brings Him both Opulence and Honour.

However, *Theron*, ſo long as you deny the Imputation of *CHRIST*'s Righteouſneſs, I muſt acknowledge, You act a conſiſtent Part, in being zealous

derful Diſpenſation, *it ſhall not be* entire *Day*, *nor* entire *Night*; *but* a Mixture or Interchange of both. Sometimes Grace triumphant, ſometimes Sin rebelling, in the Hearts of Believers. Sometimes Calamity darkening, ſometimes Proſperity brightening, the State of the Church. However, at *Even-tide*, when ſuch an Appearance is leaſt expected, *it ſhall be* unmixed, prevailing, perfect *Light*. Then the Light of the Moon ſhall be as the Light of the Sun, and the Light of the Sun as the Light of ſeven Days. Then ſhall Satan be trodden under Foot, and the LORD's People ſhall be all righteous.

* The Treaſures, which this *Perſian* Ravager, this avaritious Barbarian amaſſed, in his Invaſion of the *Mogul*'s Dominions, amounted to more than *eighty-ſeven Millions* of Money.

lous for the Perfection of perſonal Obedience. You ought either to *acquire* the One, or to *accept* the Other. Therefore, I ſhall produce no more Arguments for your Diſcouragement; but ſhall comprize the Whole of my Anſwer, in the Motto to an *Iriſh* Nobleman's Arms, TRY. Or, if this be too conciſe, I will ſubjoin, with a very little Alteration, the Words of a *Jewiſh* King; "When You have attained what You purſue, *bring me Word again, that I may go, and attain it alſo* *."

Ther. According to your Account, the moſt advanced and eſtabliſhed Chriſtians, are but like a Company of *Invalids*. Does not this extremely derogate from the Honour of our LORD, conſidered as the *Phyſician* of Souls? It ſeems to make a mere Nothing of Sanctification; and would ſwallow up *CHRIST* the King, in *CHRIST* the Prieſt.

Aſp. Invalids they are †: and ſuch will continue, till they are diſmiſſed from this great Infirmary, and admitted

* Matt. ii. 8.

† Do not the *beſt* of Men lament their Ignorance of the divine Perfections, their Slowneſs of Heart to believe the divine Promiſes, and the Languor of their Gratitude for ineſtimable, for innumerable Gifts of the divine Goodneſs?—Do they not frequently feel Deadneſs in their Devotions, Diſorder in their Affections, and various other Relics of the original Leaven?—Do they not often complain, in the Language of the Apoſtle, *When I would do Good, Evil is preſent with me?* And ſay, with the earlieſt *Chriſtians*, *We that are in this Tabernacle do groan, being burdened.* Burdened, not ſo much with Affliction: thoſe Heroes in *Chriſtianity* had learnt, to *rejoice in Tribulation*. But burdened with a Senſe of their ſpiritual Infirmities, and with the Workings of their inbred Corruption. Which, to a tender and lively Believer, are the *heavieſt* of Croſſes, and the *moſt galling* of Loads.—Nay; do not the Heirs of Glory *waſh their*

feet

admitted into that holy, happy, blessed World; Where *the Inhabitant shall no more say, I am* either in Soul or in Body *sick* *.

If the Cure was *never* to be completed, this doubtless would be dishonourable to our Almighty PHYSICIAN. But the spiritual Recovery, begun on Earth, and advancing through Time, will be perfected in Heaven, and prolonged to Eternity.—Does this make a mere Nothing of Sanctification? No, but it makes room for a continual *Progress*, and affords Cause for continual *Humiliation*. It reserves a most exalted Prerogative, for the heavenly State and beatific Vision; and perpetually reminds Us of a most important Truth, That our present Blessedness consists, not in being *free* from *all* Sin, but in having *no* Sin *imputed* to Us †.

This Imperfection of our Obedience, instead of confounding, maintains a proper *Distinction* between *CHRIST* the King, and *CHRIST* the Priest. Whereas, if We were perfect in Piety, the priestly Office, with regard to Us, would be superseded. What Need of an Intercessor, to recommend our Prayers? What Occasion for an High-Priest, to *bear the Iniquity of our holy Things* ‡? If some Taint of the original Leaven did not pollute our best Services?

very Robes, even their fairest Deeds, and their brightest Graces, *in the Blood of the LAMB?* Which, if they were free from Spot, and void of Impurity, need not be *made white* in this sacred Fountain. See 2 *Cor.* v. 4. *Rev.* vii. 14.

* Isai. xxxiii. 24. † Psal. xxxii. 2.

‡ *Exod.* xxviii. 38. *Id est, expiare Peccata, quibus sanctissima cæteroquin Actiones nostræ inquinatæ sunt.*

WITS. De Oecon.

Neither does this detract from the Wiſdom, from the Goodneſs, or from the Power of *CHRIST*. It rather adminiſters to the advantageous Diſplay of all theſe divine Attributes.—Of his *Wiſdom*; in conducting the Affairs of his Church with ſuch exact Propriety, that the Righteouſneſs of Faith may have its due Honour, and the Sanctification of the SPIRIT its proper Eſteem.—Of his *Goodneſs*; in carrying on the Work of Grace, amidſt ſo much Infirmity, and ſo many Corruptions; and in crowning, with conſummate Happineſs, ſuch frail undeſerving Creatures.—Of his *Power*; in extracting a Variety of Benefits even from—

Ther. Benefits, Aſpaſio!—Can any Thing beneficial proceed from an Evil, which, according to your own Repreſentation, is ſo incorrigibly malignant?

Aſp. It will tend to make Us *lowly in our own Eyes*. When We remember, that by Nature We are altogether become abominable; that the Remains of this hereditary Plague ſtill adhere to our Minds; that no one Faculty of our Souls, nor ſo much as a ſingle Action of our Lives, is wholly free from this noiſome Infection; how muſt ſuch a View of Ourſelves cover Us with Shame, and lay Us low in Abaſement! *Leſs than the leaſt of all thy Mercies* *, will be the Language of ſuch a One's very Soul.

It will diſpoſe Us to *compaſſionate Others*. How can We take a Brother by the Throat, and require faultleſs Perfection in *his* Behaviour, when We Ourſelves in many Things offend, in all Things fall ſhort? Every ſuch Conſideration rebukes, what I may call ſpiritual Unmercifulneſs. It pleads for Ten-

* Gen. xxxii. 10.

Tenderneſs and Forbearance to our Fellow-creatures. Is a Monitor within, and whiſpers that affecting Remonſtrance; *Oughteſt not Thou to have Compaſſion upon thy Fellow-ſervant, ſince thy Almighty LORD hath* ſuch renewed, ſuch unwearied *Pity on Thee* *.

It will teach Us to admire the *Riches* of *Grace*. Shall fallen Creatures, that are taken from the very Dunghils of Sin, and reſcued from a Hell of inward Iniquity.—Shall *they*, notwithſtanding their total Depravity in a natural; and their innumerable Deficiencies in a renewed State—Shall *they* be admitted into the Boſom of eternal Love? *They* be exalted to the Thrones of Glory, and numbered with the Princes of Heaven? This is Grace, tranſcendently rich, and divinely free indeed!

Will it not *reconcile* Us to the Approach of *Death*? This, methinks, like Wormwood on the Nipple, or Gall in the Cup, muſt tend to wean Us from the World. How can We be enamoured with ſuch a Land of Darkneſs, and ſuch a Vale of Tears? Or why ſhould We covet, when Providence gives the Signal for our Departure, to prolong our Abode in theſe Territories of Diſorder?—Surely, this muſt incline Us to leave them, every Day, more and more in our Affections; and at laſt, to leave them, without any Reluctance, by final Diſſolution. Leave them, for that better Country, where our perſonal Righteouſneſs will no longer be defective, like the *waning* Moon; but ſhine forth with conſummate Luſtre, like the *meridian* Sun, in the Kingdom of our FATHER.

* Matt. xviii. 33.

It will *endear* the Bleſſed *JESUS* in *every* Capacity; as the Stings of the fiery flying Serpents, and the Dearth of the waſte howling Wilderneſs, endeared to the *Iſraelites* both their miraculous Antidote, and their Bread from Heaven.—They who believe this Truth, muſt ſee their inexpreſſible and inceſſant Need of *CHRIST*'s Spirit. The Proteſtation of *Moſes*, on a particular Occaſion, will be the daily, the hourly Breathing of their Souls; *Carry Us not up hence, unleſs thy Preſence*, thy SPIRIT, *go with Us* *. For without this Aid, We can diſcharge no Duty aright, nor ſucceſsfully reſiſt any Temptation.—They will be exceedingly cautious, not to *grieve* † that ſacred Gueſt, leſt He depart from them, and abandon them to the Power of their lurking Corruptions. Knowing, that if *He* abandon them, when ſuch Foes are within, and ſo many Snares without; their Caſe will be worſe than *Samſon*'s, when his Locks were ſhaven, and the *Philiſtines* all around Him.

How highly will ſuch Perſons value the *Blood* of the Covenant, and the *Interceſſion* of their great HIGH-PRIEST!—They will no more preſume to enter into the Preſence of the moſt High GOD, without a fiducial Reliance upon the atoning and interceding SAVIOUR; than the Sons of *Jacob* would have ventured to appear before the Viceroy of *Egypt*, without the Company of their younger Brother ‡. In all, in all their Intercourſe with Heaven, the great PROPITIATION will be their Plea, and the great ADVOCATE their Con-

* Exod. xxxiii. 15. † Eph. iv. 30. ‡ Gen. xliii. 5.

Confidence. — The impotent Man waited at the Pool of *Bethesda*, and the *Syrian* General dipped seven Times in *Jordan*. These Persons will not only *wait*, but *live* by the Fountain opened for Sin and Uncleanness *. They will wash in the sacred sanctifying Stream, not *seven* Times only, but *seventy Times* seven.

When such Sentiments possess the Mind, how dear! O how dear and desirable will our LORD's Obedience be! Convinced that We are corrupt, universally corrupt in the very Constitution of our Nature, nothing will quiet our Consciences, or satisfy our Souls, but the Righteousness of *JESUS CHRIST*. — I called, sometime ago, our own Works *Worm-eaten Things*. And must not these Corruptions, if they remain ever so little in our Hearts, depreciate and defile whatever proceeds from them? Must they not be, in all our Works and all our Duties, like *corroding Vermin*, in the Substance of our Timber, or at the Core of our Fruits?—Should We not then renounce, utterly renounce, what is tarnished and debased by the Poison of Hell? And rely, wholly rely, for everlasting Acceptance, on our Divine HIGH-PRIEST? Who, in his mediatorial Works, as well as in his wonderful Person, is altogether *Light* and *Perfection* †; and neither in Him, nor in them, is there any Deficiency or any Darkness at all.

Excuse

* Zech. xiii. 1.

† *Light and Perfection*—This is the Meaning of that mysterious Ornament, which, in the grand officiating Robes of the *Jewish* High-Priest, was annexed to the Breast-plate, and stiled *Urim* and *Thummim*. Only the

Excuſe me, *Theron*; I fear, I have been preaching. The Importance of the Text, muſt form my Apology. It is an *Introduction*, not to the Records of Hiſtory, or the Tranſactions of Philoſophy, but to the Knowledge of Salvation, and to the Riches of *CHRIST*.

Ther. If my *Aſpaſio* has been preaching, I can aſſure Him for his Comfort, that his Audience has been very attentive; and though the Sermon was ſomewhat copious, the Hearer neither ſlept nor gaped. —However, I ſhould be glad to have the Whole reviewed, and ſummed up: that, if it has been large as the Pyramid, it may, like the Pyramid, terminate in a *Point*.

Aſp. This then is the State of our Nature.—The Image of the CREATOR is effaced. Wiſdom, Righteouſneſs, and true Holineſs are loſt.—View the Underſtanding; it is Blindneſs and Stupidity.—View the Affections; they are Diſorder and Rebellion.—View the Will; it is Enmity againſt GOD, the ſupreme Good; averſe to Things ſpiritual; but fond even to Dotage, of Things earthly and

Hebrew Words are in the plural Number, and denote *every Degree* of Illumination, and *all Kinds* of Perfection. —Does not this very ſignificantly teach Sinners, Whence to ſeek their Wiſdom, and Where to look for their Perfection? There never was, in all Ages, more than one *Urim* and *Thummim*; and only one Perſon, in each Generation, was appointed to wear it. And Who is there, in all Worlds, that can give Us heavenly Knowledge, but the SPIRIT of *CHRIST*? What is there, in Ourſelves or all Creatures, that can preſent Us unblameable before GOD, but the Righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*?

and ſenſual.—The whole Soul is deformed; diſtempered; and, to every good Purpoſe, dead.

Mortifying, abaſing Views! Methinks, they ſhould be like *Meduſa*'s Head *, or like *Michael*'s Sword †, to all Self-ſufficiency and all Self-dependence.—Shall ſuch a Creature pretend to be poſſeſſed of thoſe ſacred Endowments, which may conſtitute a proper Recommendation to infinite *Holineſs*?—Is ſuch a Creature qualified to perform thoſe righteous Acts, which may bear the Teſt of inflexible *Juſtice*? Can ſuch a Creature fulfil that extenſive and exalted Law, which allows of no Failure; which demands perfect Obedience; and denounces a Curſe on every Tranſgreſſion?

Should he conceive the vain Hope, or make the vainer Attempt, I would now addreſs Him, as *Jehoaſh* formerly anſwered *Amaziah*.—*Amaziah* King of *Judah*, elated with the little Victories he had obtained over the *Edomites*, began to fancy Himſelf invincible. Prompted by this fooliſh Imagination, He challenges *Jehoaſh* King of *Iſrael*, to meet Him in a pitched Battle; and receives this ironical Apologue by way of Reply.—Which, for Gallantry of Spirit and Delicacy of Wit, for Poignancy of Satire and Propriety of Application, has ſeldom been equaled, perhaps never exceeded.—*The Thiſtle that was in Lebanon, ſent to the Cedar that was in Lebanon, ſaying, Give thy Daughter to my Son to Wife:*

* *Meduſa*'s Head, the Poets tell Us, was ſo monſtrous and horrible, that the very Sight of it congealed the Blood. Nay; turned every Beholder into Stone.

† *Michael*'s Sword, *Milton* informs Us, was ſo keen and forcible, that nothing could reſiſt its Edge; whatever it ſmote, was cut in Pieces.

and there paſſed by a wild Beaſt that was in Lebanon, and trod down the Thiſtle *. What are We—when We offer to eſtabliſh our own Righteouſneſs, or preſume to juſtify Ourſelves before the moſt High GOD—but *deſpicable Thiſtles*, that fancy themſelves *ſtately Cedars?* And are not various Temptations, is not every Corruption, a wild Beaſt of the Deſart, which will trample on the impotent Boaſter, and tread his haughty Pretenſions in the Duſt?

* 2 Kings xiv. 9.

DIALOGUE XIV.

ASPASIO was employed in preparing for his Journey. *Theron*, free from Buſineſs, and diſengaged from Company, had the greateſt Part of the Day to Himſelf. Which he ſpent, in *reviewing* the Subſtance of their late Conferences; not without intermingled Aſpirations to GOD, for the Guidance of his Divine SPIRIT.

At Evening, He *went*, like the Patriarch of old, *into the Field to meditate* *: amidſt the Calm of Nature, to meditate on the Grace of the Goſpel.—The Sky was peculiarly beautiful, and perfectly clear; only where the fine *Indigo* received an agreeable Heightening, by a few thin and ſcattered Clouds; which imbibed the ſolar Rays, and looked like penſile Fleeces of pureſt *Wool*.—All Things appeared with ſo mild, ſo majeſtic, ſo charming an Aſpect, that, intent as He was upon a different Subject, He could not but indulge the following Soliloquy.

" How

* Gen. xxiv. 63.

" How delightful are the Scenes of rural Nature! " Especially, to the *philoſophic* Eye, and *contemplative* " Mind.—I cannot wonder, that Perſons in high " Life, are ſo fond of retiring from a conſpicuous " and exalted Station, to the Covert of a ſhady " Grove, or the Margin of a cryſtal Stream. Are " ſo deſirous of quitting the ſmoky Town, and noiſy " Street; in order to breathe purer Air, and ſurvey " the Wonders of Creation, in the ſilent, the ſe- " rene, the peaceful *Villa*.

" 'Tis true, in the Country, there are none of the " modiſh, I had almoſt ſaid, meretricious Orna- " ments of that *falſe* Politeneſs, which refines People " out of their Veracity. But an eaſy Simplicity of " Manners, with an unaffected Sincerity of Mind.— " Here, the ſolemn Farce of Ceremony is ſeldom " brought into play; and the pleaſing Deluſions of " Compliment have no Place. But the Brow is the " *real* Index of the Temper, and Speech the *genuine* " Interpreter of the Heart.

" In the Country, I acknowledge, We are ſel- " dom invited to ſee the *mimic* Attempts of human " Art. But We, every where, behold the grand " and maſterly Exertions of divine Power.—No " *Theatre* erects its narrow Stage; ſurrounds it, " with puny Rows of aſcending Seats; or adorns " it, with a ſhifting Series of gorgeous Scenery. " But *Fields* extend their ample Area; at firſt, " lightly clad with a Scarf of ſpringing Green; " then, deeply planted with an Arrangement of " ſpindling Stalks; as a few more Weeks advance, " covered with a Profuſion of bearded or huſky " Grain; at laſt, richly laden with a Harveſt of " yellow Plenty.

" *Meadows*

" *Meadows* diſcloſe their beautiful Boſom; yield
" a ſoft and fertile Lap for the luxuriant Herbage;
" and ſuckle Myriads of the faireſt, gayeſt Flowers.
" Which, without any vain Oſtentation, or jea-
" lous Anxiety, rival each other in all the Elegance
" of Dreſs.—*Groves* of various Leaf; arrayed in
" freſheſt Verdure, and liberal of their reviving
" Shade; riſe, in amiable, in noble Proſpect, all
" around.—*Droves* of ſturdy Oxen, ſtrong for La-
" bour, or fat for the Shambles; *Herds* of ſleeky
" Kine, with Milk in their Udders, and Violets in
" their Noſtrils; *Flocks* of well-fleeced Sheep, with
" their ſnowy Lambkins, friſking at their Side; theſe
" compoſe the living Machinery.—Boundleſs Tracts
" of bending *Azure*, varniſhed with inimitable De-
" licacy, and hung with ſtarry Lamps, or irradiated
" with ſolar Luſtre, form the ſtately Cieling.—While
" the early Breezes, and the evening Gales; charged
" with no unwholeſome Vapours, breeding no peſti-
" lential Taint; but fanning the humid Buds, and
" waving their odoriferous Wings, diſpenſe a Pro-
" fuſion of *Sweets*, mingled with the moſt ſovereign
" Supports of Health.—This is the School of In-
" duſtry! This the Magazine of Plenty! And are
" they not incomparably *more delightful*, as well as
" infinitely *leſs dangerous*, than thoſe Seminaries of
" Lewdneſs and Impiety, where Sin and Ruin wear
" the Maſk of Pleaſure? Than thoſe Temples of
" Profuſeneſs and Debauchery, where *Belial* is daily
" or nightly worſhipped with, what his Votaries
" call, modiſh Recreation, and genteel Amuſe-
" ment?

" Here indeed is no tuneful *Voice*, to melt in
" Strains of amorous Anguiſh, and tranſfuſe the

" ſickening

" ſickening Fondneſs to the Hearer's Breaſt. No
" ſkilful Artiſt, to inform the *Lute* with muſical
" Enchantment; to ſtrike infectious Melody from
" the Viol; and ſooth away the Reſolution and
" Activity of Virtue, in wanton Deſires, or vo-
" luptuous Indolence.—But the *Plains* low; the
" *Hills* bleat; and the hollow circling *Rocks* echo
" with the univerſal Song. Every Valley remur-
" murs to the Fall of ſilver Fountains, or the liquid
" Lapſe of gurgling Rills.—*Birds*, when the chear-
" ful Morning riſes, or the gentle Evening de-
" ſcends, perched on a thouſand Boughs, play a
" thouſand Airs, wildly yet ſweetly harmonious.
" And did ever Muſic exceed their untaught
" ſprightly Warblings? Or can any Colours out-
" vie their gay and gloſſy Plumage?

" Charmed therefore with the fineſt Views; lulled
" with the ſofteſt Sounds; and treated with the rich-
" eſt Odours; what can be wanting to complete the
" Delight? Here is *every* Entertainment for the
" Eye; the moſt *refined* Gratifications for the Ear;
" and a *perpetual* Banquet for the Smell; without
" any inſidious Decoy, for the Integrity of our
" Conduct, or even for the Purity of our Fancy.

" O ye blooming Walks, and flowery Lawns,
" ſurrounded with dewy Landſcapes! How often
" have *Patriots* and *Heroes*, laid aſide the Burden
" of Power, and ſtole away from the Glare of
" Grandeur, to enjoy themſelves * in your com-
" poſed Retreats!—Ye moſſy Couches, and fra-
" grant Bowers, ſkirted with cooling Caſcades!
" How many *illuſtrious* Perſonages, after all their
" glorious

* ——————— *Mihi me reddentis Agelli*,
ſays *Horace* of his little Country-ſeat.

" glorious Toil for the public Good, have ſought
" an honourable and welcome Repoſe in your
" downy Lap *?—Ye venerable Oaks, and ſo-
" lemn Groves! Woods, that whiſper to the
" quivering Gale! Clifts, that over-hang the
" darkened Flood! Who can number the *Sages*
" and *Saints*, that have devoted the Day to Study,
" or reſigned a vacant Hour to healthy Exerciſe,
" beneath your ſilvan Porticos, and waving Arches?
" That, far from the dull Impertinence of Man,
" have liſtened to the inſtructive Voice of GOD;
" and contemplated the Works of his adorable
" Hand, amidſt your moſs-grown Cells, and rocky
" Shades.—How *inelegant*, or how *inſenſible* is the
" Mind, which has no awakened lively Reliſh
" for theſe ſweet Receſſes, and their exquiſite
" Beauties!"

But whither am I carried? Is not this *rural Enthuſiaſm?* I find myſelf talking to Trees; and forget the momentous Queſtion, which waits for our Deciſion. Here then let my Rhapſody ceaſe, and my Enquiry proceed.—Does it betray a Want of true Delicacy, to be inſenſible of Nature's Charms? My *Aſpaſio* thinks, it argues as wrong a Taſte in practical Divinity, not to acquieſce in the imputed Righteouſneſs of *JESUS CHRIST*.—To this Doctrine I have always been extremely averſe. I ſet myſelf

* *Virgil* was ſo ſmitten with the Amiableneſs of theſe Scenes, that He aſſigns them as an Habitation for happy Spirits, in the Regions of *Elyſium*.

Lucis habitamus opacis,
Riparumque Toros, & Prata recentia Rivis
Incolimus.

myſelf to oppoſe it with Objections, drawn from the *Reaſon* of Things, and from various Paſſages of *Scripture*. To all which my Friend replied. And though I was ſcarcely convinced, yet I was ſilenced by his Anſwers.

I pleaded for the Sufficiency of our *ſincere* Obedience. Eſpecially, when accompanied with *Repentance*, and recommended by the *Merits* of *CHRIST*.—Neither was this Attempt ſucceſsful. His Arguments, ſomewhat like the flaming Sword, planted at the Entrance of Paradiſe, *turned every Way* *; and precluded all Acceſs to Life, on the Foot of our own Duties.

At length, *Aſpaſio* quitted the defenſive, and attacked me in his Turn. He explained the Precepts, and enforced the Threatenings of the divine Law. So *exact* its Tenour! That it demands a perfect and perſevering Conformity to every Injunction.—So *extenſive* its Authority! That it reaches the inmoſt Thoughts; and requires Obedience, not barely in the Actions of the Life, but the very Intentions of the Heart.—So *inexorable* its Severity! That it condemns every the ſmalleſt Offence, and curſes every the leaſt Offender.

This Remonſtrance had ſome of the Terror, and almoſt all the Effect, of a maſked Battery.—It was quite unexpected, and alarmed me conſiderably.—To puſh his Advantage, He enlarged upon the *infinite Purity* of GOD. A GOD glorious in Holineſs: *Who cannot look upon Evil*, with any Connivance, or without the utmoſt Abhorrence. Who will aſſuredly deſtroy, either the Sin, or the Sinner, from before his Face.

To

* Gen. iii. 24.

To complete his Victory, He played off the Doctrine of original *Guilt*, and original *Depravity*.—That I am, by Nature, *a Child of Wrath*. Fallen from GOD by the Apoſtacy of the firſt *Adam*. Dead in Treſpaſſes and Sins. My Will, Enmity againſt GOD: all my Faculties corrupt: every Imagination evil!

After all, He bid me conſider—What Fruits muſt ſpring, from *ſuch a Nature?*—How they muſt appear, when compared with *ſuch a Law?*—What they muſt deſerve, when tried before *ſuch a GOD?* And whether I will venture to put myſelf upon Trial at the divine Tribunal, on the Plea of ſuch Performances?

Theſe, I muſt confeſs, are very weighty and ſtartling Queries. If theſe Repreſentations are true, the Face of human Affairs carries a moſt gloomy Aſpect. Or rather, a moſt dreadful Storm is hanging over the Children of Men.—*Aſpaſio* urges me to fly, without any Delay, to the Covert of *CHRIST*'s meritorious Obedience. This, He ſays, was wrought out, in the Name, and in the Stead of Sinners: this will be admitted, both at the Throne of Grace, and the Bar of Judgment, as their juſtifying Righteouſneſs.

This, He adds, opens a Way, on GOD's Part, for the largeſt Emanations and moſt honourable Exerciſe of Mercy. On Man's Part, it founds a Title to Pardon, to Life, and every ſpiritual Bleſſing.—This Doctrine, eſpecially in ſuch a Connection, begins to put on a *more recommending* Appearance. My Prejudices are really wearing away. I am almoſt a Convert.

Aſpaſio

Aſpaſio over-heard the Cloſe of theſe Reflections. Unwilling to interrupt his Friend, in ſo ſerious an Enquiry; and deſirous to obſerve the Iſſue of ſo intereſting a Debate; He had hitherto concealed Himſelf. But thinking this a favourable Minute, He ſtepped forward, and ſaid—

Aſp. Almoſt! and why not *altogether* a Convert? What ſhould hinder my dear *Theron*, from ſubmitting to ſo *rational* a Scheme, with the moſt entire Acquieſcence? What ſhould hinder Him from embracing ſo *comfortable* a Doctrine, with the utmoſt Complacency? Why ſhould he not ſubſcribe, both with Hand and Heart, that divine Decree? *Their Righteouſneſs is of me, ſaith the LORD* *.

Ther. If, by this Doctrine, the Claims of the Law are anſwered—If the Perfections of GOD are glorified—If the Intereſts of Morality are ſecured—I muſt acknowledge, it will be *more worthy* of Acceptance, than I could once have imagined.

Aſp. And if all theſe Points are not gained; gained too in the moſt eminent Manner; I ſolemnly declare, that I will never plead for imputed Righteouſneſs more.

But the *Claims* of the Law are all anſwered. For, there is nothing in its ſacred Injunctions, which *CHRIST* did not perform; and nothing in its awful Threatenings, which *CHRIST* did not ſuſtain. He fulfilled all its Precepts, by an unſpotted Purity of Heart, and the moſt perfect Integrity of Life. He exhauſted its whole Curſe, when he hung upon the Croſs, abandoned by his FATHER, and a bleeding Victim for the Sins of his People.—This Obedience brings higher Honour to the divine Law.

* Iſai. liv. 17.

Law, than it could poſſibly have received, from the uninterrupted Duty of *Adam*, and all his Poſterity, in all their Generations.

The *Perfections* of GOD, which were diſhonoured by our Rebellion, are glorified.—He appears, by this Method of Juſtification, inconceivably rich in ſhewing Mercy; yet ſteady, inflexibly ſteady, in executing Vengeance. The *Scepter* of Grace, and the *Sword* of Juſtice, have each its due Exerciſe, each its full Scope. The Holineſs of the divine Nature, and the Dignity of the divine Government, are not only maintained, but moſt magnificently diſplayed. Indeed, it is the peculiar Excellence of this wonderful Expedient, that it renders *all* the divine Attributes ſupremely venerable, and ſupremely amiable.

Ther. But are the Intereſts of *Morality* ſecured? This is what I am ſtrongly inclined to doubt. And to ſay the Truth, this is now my principal Objection to your Scheme.

Aſp. I ſhall never blame my Friend, for being vigilant and jealous over the Intereſts of Morality. If our Doctrine had a malignant Aſpect on true Morality, I would give my Voice againſt it, and uſe all my Endeavours to ſuppreſs it.—But it is formed with every Tendency to awaken the *utmoſt Dread* of Sin, and affect Us with the *warmeſt Senſe* of our CREATOR's Love. And is not *that* the ſtrongeſt Barrier againſt the Encroachments of Vice? Is not *this* the ſweeteſt Inducement to the Practice of Virtue?

I am glad to find, that a Jealouſy for the Intereſts of Morality, is the chief Obſtacle in the Way of your Aſſent. Becauſe, this Jealouſy, I am perſuaded,

ſuaded, is much of the ſame Nature with thoſe forbidding and miſtaken Apprehenſions, which our Anceſtors entertained, concerning the *Ocean*. They looked upon the Ocean, as an unſurmountable Obſtruction and Bar to univerſal Society. Whereas, it is in Fact, the very Opening and Avenue to this Society; the only Means of ſetting on Foot a general Intercourſe; and the great Highway to all the Nations of the Earth. What is here affirmed, may, on ſome future Occaſion, be proved.—At preſent, let me deſire you to imagine, rather, may the Bleſſed SPIRIT enable You to believe, That your Sins *are expiated*, through the Death of *JESUS CHRIST*: That a Righteouſneſs *is given* You, by virtue of which, You may have free and welcome Acceſs to GOD; the Merit of which You may plead, in order to enjoy all the Bleſſings of Time and Eternity.—Then let me aſk; Will this *alienate* your Affections from your Almighty BENEFACTOR? Will this *irritate* evil Concupiſcence, or ſend You to carnal Gratifications in queſt of Happineſs? Quite the Reverſe. When this Faith is wrought in your Heart, nothing will be ſo powerful, to produce holy Love, and willing Obedience; nothing ſo effectual, to refine your Temper, to exalt your Deſires, and enable You to overcome the World.

What ſays the Apoſtle? *I through the Law am dead to the Law* *. Being made to underſtand its great Extent, and high Perfection, I have no longer any Hope of Juſtification, through my own Conformity to its Precepts.—Did this prompt Him, did this embolden Him, to neglect or violate his Duty? Hear

* Gal. ii. 19.

Hear the ſacred Writer's own Declaration. I am releaſed from the Rigour and Bondage of the Law; I am directed to *CHRIST* for Righteouſneſs and Salvation; *that I may live unto GOD.* That my whole Life may be devoted to HIS Honour, who has brought me into a State ſo delightful, into a Liberty ſo glorious.

Ther. This Liberty, I am afraid, will be of very little Service to the licentious and gay World.

Aſp. I ſhall be in no Pain even for the *gay World*, if once they cordially receive this Grace, and are vitally influenced by this Doctrine. Which, far from weakening any one Principle of Piety, adds to every other Motive, the endearing Engagements of Gratitude, and the winning Perſuaſives of Love.

Nay; I am perſuaded, that Multitudes in the gay and licentious World, are held faſt in the *fatal* Snare, by their Ignorance of this ſweet, alluring, conſolatory Truth. They find themſelves deeply obnoxious to divine Juſtice, and feel themſelves ſtrongly bound with the Chains of Senſuality. They think, it is impoſſible to clear the enormous Score of their Guilt; impoſſible to deliver themſelves from the confirmed Dominion of Sin. Therefore, like *deſperate* Debtors, they ſtifle every ſerious Thought; leſt a Conſciouſneſs of their long Arrears, and a Proſpect of the dreadful Reckoning, ſhould *torment them before the Time* *.

But if they were informed, that the infinitely merciful SON of GOD, has undertaken to redeem ſuch undone and helpleſs Sinners—That He has thoroughly expiated the moſt horrid Tranſgreſſions,

* Matt. viii. 29.

and procured even for ungodly Wretches *, all the needful Supplies of ſtrengthening Grace—That, inſtead of being prohibited, they are *invited* to partake, *freely* to partake, of theſe unſpeakable Bleſſings—Were they acquainted with theſe glad Tidings of the Goſpel; did they really believe theſe glad Tidings of the Goſpel; their Chains, which now are like Steel and Adamant, would *become like a Thread of Tow, when it toucheth the Fire* †. Yes, my Friend; theſe *Truths*, if once revealed and received in their Hearts, would be an infallible Method to *make them free* ‡.

What ſhall I ſay more, to obtain my *Theron's* Approbation? Shall I point out and plead the moſt illuſtrious Precedents?—GOD the FATHER is well pleaſed with this Righteouſneſs of our REDEEMER. He expreſſes his Complacency by the moſt emphatical Words: *Behold my Servant, whom I uphold; mine Elect, in whom my Soul delighteth* ‖. In *CHRIST* and his Righteouſneſs, GOD is not only pleaſed, *but delighted:* his *very Soul*, every Perfection of the GODHEAD, with ineffable Satisfaction,

* For thoſe, who have ſinned againſt the Light of Nature, as the Heathens, and againſt the Light of Scripture, as the *Jews*. For thoſe, who have denied *CHRIST*, like *Peter*; blaſphemed and perſecuted Him, like *Paul*.—Many, that have fallen into great Sins, are ruined for ever, becauſe they do not account the Grace of *CHRIST* ſufficient for their Pardon and Sanctification. They think that they are gone and paſt all Hope of Recovery; that *their Tranſgreſſions and their Sins are upon them*, unpardoned and unpardonable; *therefore they pine away in them, and how ſhall they live?* Ezek. xxxiii. 10. MARSH. *Goſp. Myſt. Sanct.* Chap. x.

† Judg. xvi. 9. ‡ John viii. 32. ‖ Iſai. xlii. 1.

faction, reſts and acquieſces in them.—I ſaid *ineffable*; for He has declared this, in a Manner ſuperior to all the Force of Language, by raiſing our crucified SURETY from the Dead; by exalting Him to the Heaven of Heavens; and placing Him at his own Right-hand in Glory.

Our *LORD JESUS CHRIST* is well pleaſed. He eſteems it his Honour to ſhine forth as the everlaſting Righteouſneſs of his People. It is the brighteſt Jewel of his mediatorial Crown. In this He *ſees of the Travail of his Soul, and is ſatisfied.* Accounting Himſelf fully recompenſed, for all the Labours of his Life, and all the Sorrows of his Death, when Sinners are waſhed from their Guilt in his Blood, and preſented faultleſs by his Obedience.

The HOLY SPIRIT is equally pleaſed with this great Tranſaction, and its matchleſs Effects. It is his peculiar Office, and favourite Employ, to *convince* the World of their SAVIOUR's Righteouſneſs. Not only that his Nature was ſpotleſly pure, and his Converſation perfectly holy; but that from both reſults a Righteouſneſs, of infinite Dignity, and everlaſting Efficacy: ſufficient, throughout all Ages ſufficient, to procure Acceptance and Salvation for the moſt unworthy Creatures.

Since then, this Method of Acceptance and Salvation, is excellent and glorious, in the Eyes of the adorable TRINITY—Since it magnifies the Law, and yields the moſt exalted Honour to its Divine AUTHOR—Since it makes ample Proviſion for the Holineſs of a *corrupt*, and the Happineſs of a *ruined* World—Why ſhould my Friend any longer diſlike it; oppoſe it; or treat it with a cold Indifference? Surely, all theſe grand Recommendations,

are enough to over-rule any little Objections, which may ariſe from the Suſpicions of Timidity, or may be ſtarted by the Artifices of Sophiſtry.

Ther. I know not how it is, *Aſpaſio*; but I cannot reconcile myſelf to this Doctrine of imputed Righteouſneſs: notwithſtanding all the Pains You have taken, to make me a Convert.

Aſp. The Diſappointment is mine, but the Loſs is yours, *Theron.*—However, let me entreat You, not to reject my Sentiments abſolutely, nor to condemn them prematurely. Suppoſe it poſſible at leaſt, that they *may* be true; and weigh them in an even Balance.—Learn Wiſdom from your *Aſpaſio*'s Folly. I was once exactly in your Situation; ſaw Things in your Light, and through your Medium.

Converſing, I well remember, with a devout but plain Perſon, our Diſcourſe happened to turn upon that ſolemn Admonition; *If any Man will come after ME, let Him deny Himſelf* *. I was haranguing upon the Import and Extent of the Duty. Shewing, that merely to forbear the infamous Action, is little. We muſt deny Admittance, deny Entertainment at leaſt, to the evil *Imagination*; and quench even the enkindling Spark of irregular Deſire.—When I had ſhot a random Bolt, my honeſt Friend replied; "There is another Inſtance of Self-denial, "to which this Injunction extends, and which is "of very great Moment in the Chriſtian Religion. "I mean, the Inſtance of renouncing our own "Strength, and our own Righteouſneſs; not leaning on *that*, for Holineſs; nor relying on *this*, "for Juſtification."—I thought the old Man, I muſt

* Matt. xvi. 24.

muſt confeſs, little better than a ſuperſtitious Dotard; and wondered at (what I then fanſied) the motley Mixture of Piety and Oddity in his Notions. But now I diſcern Senſe, Solidity, and Truth in his Obſervation *. Now I perceive, that We ourſelves are often the Dreamers, when We imagine Others to be faſt aſleep.

Ther. You have no Reaſon to be aſhamed, *Aſpaſio*, of receiving Inſtruction from your honeſt Counſellor. For, You know, it was obſerved by the Ancients, and is now paſſed into a Maxim;

Πολλακι και κηπωρος ανηρ μαλα καιριον ειπεν.

Neither need You ſuſpect, that I ſhall forget or diſregard your Caution, relating to a precipitate Determination of my Judgment. No; I ſhall endeavour to avoid the Rock, on which my Friend ſtruck; but happily, it ſeems, eſcaped Shipwreck. —You may likewiſe aſſure Yourſelf, that, upon a Subject of ſuch exceeding great, of eternal Conſequence, I ſhall not fail to uſe the moſt attentive and impartial Conſideration. An *indolent* Supineneſs, or a *bigoted* Obſtinacy, in this great Criſis of Affairs, would be of all Errors the moſt inexcuſable, and muſt prove of all Miſcarriages the moſt fatal.

* *Milton* thought the ſame, otherwiſe he would never have put thoſe Words into the Mouth of a *divine* Speaker.

——————Thy Merit,
Imputed *ſhall abſolve them, who* renounce
Their own, *both righteous and unrighteous, Deeds:*
And live in Thee tranſplanted, and from Thee
Receive new Life.

Book III. 290.

Asp. But ſtill *You cannot reconcile Yourſelf*.—And no Wonder. For this Way of Salvation runs directly counter to the Stream of corrupt Nature, It puzzles our Reaſon, and offends our Pride.—"What? ſhall "We, not work, but *believe unto Righteouſneſs*? &c "Shall We receive all *freely*, and reckon Ourſelves "no better than *unprofitable* Servants! Having no "thing, nothing whatſoever, that may recommend "Us to our Maker!"—This is a Method, to which We ſhould never ſubmit; this is a Propoſal, which We ſhould always ſpurn; were not our natural Sentiments rectified, and our high Imaginations abaſed, by the Power of Grace.

Let me remind You of a little Incident, which You muſt have read in the *Grecian* Hiſtory. A certain Stranger came, one Day, to dine with ſome *Lacedemonians*; who always ſat down at a public Table, and were content with the plaineſt Food. The Gentleman, accuſtomed to higher Eating, could not forbear expreſſing his Diſguſt, at the *homely* Proviſion.—Sir, ſaid the Cook, You don't make uſe of the *Sauce*.—What do You mean? replied the Gueſt.—You don't uſe hard Exerciſe; nor habituate Yourſelf to long Abſtinence; nor bring a ſharpened Appetite to the Meal.—And You, my dear Friend, I am apprehenſive, have not the Sauce; have not the proper Preparative for this ſalutary Doctrine; which is indeed the Bread of Life, and the very Marrow of the Goſpel.

Ther. What Preparative? Did You not juſt now ſay? That all was free, and nothing needful, but only to receive the Bleſſing?

Asp. Rom. xi. 16.

A. True; nothing is needful, as inclining GOD to give; but only as inclining Us to receive. Would You seek, would You solicit, would You so much as accept, a Pardon from your Sovereign, unless You stood convicted of some capital Crime, or was apparently liable to Condemnation? Neither will sinful Man seek, no nor *accept* the great Atonement, till He is made sensible, that the Wrath of GOD and the Damnation of Hell, are what He justly deserves; and what, without the Propitiation of *CHRIST*, He must unavoidably suffer.

This then is the Preparative—A Sense of the horrible Filthiness of the least Sin in the Sight of GOD; of the innumerable Sins of our Heart and Life; and of our undone damnable State on this Account.—While *destitute* of these Convictions, our Souls will be like the full Stomach, that loathes even the Honey-comb.—So long as these Convictions are *slight*, and *hover* only in the Imagination; We shall be like *Gallio* *, listless, indifferent, and *caring*

for

* *Acts* xviii. 17. A late Commentator, of distinguished Eminence, has attempted to vindicate *Gallio*'s Conduct, and would represent it, as an amiable Instance of *Prudence* and *Moderation*.

According to my Apprehension, this *Roman* Governor acted a Part, both irreligious and unjust,—*Irreligious*, because he refused to hear the Apostle's Defence; which was the most likely Means of his Conversion and Salvation. As one great End, why Providence permitted the Preachers of the Gospel to be *brought before Rulers and Kings*, was, that such an Appearance might serve εις μαρτυριον αυτοις, Matt. x. 18. *for a Testimony* (not *against*, as We translate the Word, but) *to them*. That even the Potentates of the Earth, prejudiced and supercilious as they were, might hereby have an Opportunity, of

hearing

for None of these Things.—But when they are *deep*, and *penetrate* the Heart; then the Righteousness of a REDEEMER will be sweet, tasteful, and inviting. Sweet as Myrrh and Frankincense to the Smell; tasteful as Milk and Honey to the Palate; inviting, as Gold and Treasures to the ruined Bankrupt.

Ther. How are these Convictions wrought in the Soul?

Asp.

hearing the *Christian* Doctrine, and seeing its Efficacy on the Spirits of Men.—*Unjust*, because He permitted *Sosthenes*, then an innocent Person, afterwards a Disciple of *CHRIST* (1 *Cor.* i. 1.) to be so illegally treated, and outrageously abused, without interposing for his Rescue. Here was evidently a Breach of the Peace; a manifest Violation of the Laws. Of *this* therefore, as a civil Magistrate, He *ought* to have taken Cognizance. However He might fancy Himself discharged from the Obligation, of attending to the Gospel, or protecting its Preachers: however He might imagine Himself authorized, to treat divine Truths with Contempt; and call *the Striving for the Faith*, a Wrangling about *Words and Names*.—"Words and Names only!" Far otherwise, *Gallio*. The Question, concerning *JESUS CHRIST* and his Salvation, is pregnant with the Life of the World, and of greater Moment than all Things under the Sun.

Besides; if the HOLY SPIRIT intended to fix a Mark of *Approbation*, rather than a Brand of *Infamy*, upon the *Proconsul*'s Behaviour; I cannot but think, it would have been expressed in a Manner, different from —και ουδεν τουτων τω Γαλλιωνι εμελεν. Which, if it be the Language of Applause, requires some more than ordinary Skill in Criticism, to understand it aright. But, if it be the Voice of Censure, is obvious and intelligible to every Reader.—Should farther Proof be wanted, We may compare this Incident with the Behaviour of *Sergius Paulus*, on a like Occasion; and with the Encomium given Him, on that Account by unerring Wisdom. *Acts* xiii. 7.

Asp. By the Law in the Knowledge of Sin. Conſequently, by the Law is the Conviction of our undone State. Let Us therefore endeavour to underſtand the Law of GOD: how pure, how extenſive, how ſublimely perfect it is.—Then, judge of our ſpiritual Condition, not from the *flattering* Suggeſtions of Self-love, nor from the *defective* Examples of our Fellow-creatures, but by this *unerring* Standard of the Sanctuary.—Above all, let Us beſeech the GOD and FATHER of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*, to ſend his enlightening SPIRIT into our Hearts. For indeed, without the enlightening Influences of the SPIRIT, We may have the divine Law in our Hand; We may comprehend its grammatical Meaning; yet be like blind *Bartimeus* under the meridian Sun. It is the bleſſed SPIRIT alone, who can rend the Veil of Ignorance from our Minds; and ſhew Us, either "the wonderful Things of GOD's Law," or the glorious Myſteries of his Goſpel. In this Senſe, our polite Poet * ſpeaks a Truth, as ſingularly important, as it is elegantly expreſſed:

He from thick Films ſhall purge the viſual Ray,
And on the ſightleſs Eye-balls pour the Day.

Will You give me leave to propoſe another Expedient? Which, I believe, may be conſiderably ſerviceable in this particular Caſe. Which, I am aſſured, will be greatly advantageous in many other Reſpects.

Ther.

* Mr. *Pope*, in his charming Poem, entitled *The Meſſiah.*

Ther. Backward as I am to adopt your Doctrine, I am no Enemy to my own Intereſt. Therefore, ſhall not only give You leave to propoſe, but give You Thanks for communicating, ſo valuable an Advice.

Aſp. It is, in reality, none of mine. It was long ago recommended by your old Acquaintance *Horace* *. It conſiſts in *Keeping a Diary.*

Compile a ſecret Hiſtory of your Heart and Conduct.—Take notice of the Manner, in which your *Time* is ſpent; and of the Strain, which runs through your *Diſcourſe.* How often the former is loſt in Trifles, how often the latter evaporates in Vanity. Attend to the *Principle* from which your Actions flow; whether from the ſteady habitual Love of GOD, or from ſome rambling Impulſe, and a cuſtomary Propenſity to pleaſe Yourſelf?—Minute down your Sins of *Omiſſion.* How frequently You neglect to glorify your CREATOR; to edify your Fellow-creatures; and to improve Yourſelf in Knowledge and Holineſs.—Obſerve the Frame of your Spirit in *religious* Duties. With what Reluctance they are undertaken, and with what Indevotion performed; with how many Wanderings of Thought, and how much Dulneſs of Deſire.—How often, in tranſacting *common* Affairs, You feel the inordinate Sallies of Paſſion, the Workings of evil Concupiſcence, or the Intruſion of foolish Imaginations. Regiſter

* *Ille velut fidis Arcana Sodalibus olim*
Credebat Libris: neque ſi male ceſſerat uſquam
Decurrens alio, neque ſi bene: quo ſit, ut omnis
Veſtivâ pateat verſuti deſcripta Tabellâ
Vita Senis.

HORAT. Sat.

Register those *secret* Faults, to which None but your own Conscience is privy, and which None but the all-seeing Eye discerns.—Often review these interesting Memoirs. Frequently contemplate Yourself in this faithful Mirror. And don't be afraid, to see your Wants and Weaknesses; Depravity of your Heart, and the Iniquity of your Life.—An Artist, sometime ago, took a *Survey* of your Estate. Drew the Form, and measured the Dimensions, of each Inclosure. Pictured out every Hedge, and scarce omitted a single Tree, which grew upon the Premises.—Act thus with your Will, your Understanding, your Affections. These are your noble *internal Demesne*. Of which None but Yourself can be a competent Surveyor.

Ther. It is unreasonable and preposterous, I must acknowledge, to be minutely exact in meaner Matters, and to use no Accuracy of Inspection in the most momentous Affairs. To have a correct Draught of our Lands, which are a *transient* Inheritance; and no Map of that *everlasting* Possession, the Soul.

Asp. Gratify me then, my dear *Theron*, in this Particular. As I purpose to set out very early in the Morning, I shall insist upon it; that You do not rise before your usual Time, in order to compliment my Departure. But I now make it my *last* Wish, and my *parting* Request, that You will, for some Months at least, keep a Diary.

You have wondered at my Opinion, concerning the Corruption of our Nature, and the Insufficiency of our Righteousness. This may seem strange, this may appear shocking, to a Mind *unacquainted* with itself. But, when You have searched your Heart, by this Probe; when You have felt the Pulse of your

your Soul, by Self-examination: then, You will be better able to judge of my Sentiments, and enter into the Reaſons of my Faith.

By this Means, We ſhall alſo diſcover the Sins, which moſt eaſily beſet Us; which moſt frequently elude our Vigilance, and baffle our Reſolution. We ſhall learn, *how* to poſt our Guard; *when* to exerciſe the ſtricteſt Watch; and *where* to direct the Artillery of Prayer.—In a Word; We ſhall learn, better than from ten thouſand Volumes, to KNOW OURSELVES. A Knowledge, which was ſuppoſed, by the antient Philoſophers, to deſcend from Heaven *; and which, I believe, our *Chriſtian* Divines will allow, has a happy Tendency to lead People thither. Becauſe, of all other Preparatives, it beſt diſpoſes them for that bleſſed REDEEMER, who is the Way, the only Way to thoſe bliſsful Manſions.

Now I have mentioned a *Way*, let me ſuppoſe You traveling through an unknown Country. You come to a Place, where the Road divides itſelf into two equally inviting Parts. You are at a loſs, which Track to purſue. Whoſe Direction will You chooſe to follow? That Man's, who has paſſed through *neither* of them? That Man's, who has paſſed through *one* of them only? Or that Man's, who has paſſed and repaſſed them *both?*—To wait for an Anſwer, would be an Affront to your Judgment. Only let me obſerve, that the laſt is your *Aſpaſio*'s Caſe. He has traveled long, and proceeded far, even in *your* Path. All, that Circumſpection and Aſſiduity; all, that Prayer and Self-denial; all, that Faſting and Alms,

* ——— *E Cœlo deſcendit, γνωθι σεαυτον.*

Alms, and every other Means of Grace could do; in order to eſtabliſh a Righteouſneſs of his own, has been done. But to no Purpoſe.—He has alſo trod every Step in the Way, which he recommends to his beloved Friend. He has made the Trial, concerning the Righteouſneſs, *without Works*, or the Righteouſneſs of GOD imputed. He can ſet his *Probatum eſt*, to whatſoever He adviſes on this Subject; and may venture to ſay, with his Divine MASTER, *We ſpeak that We do know* *, and teſtify that We have experienced.

Ther. I am ſorry to obſerve, that the Night is coming on, and our Converſation almoſt at an End. My Regret is increaſed, by the Conſideration of your intended Journey.—Though Buſineſs obliges You to *depart*; it will, I hope, afford You Leiſure to *write*. This will be ſome Compenſation for the Want of your Company.

Yonder Sun is ſinking below the Horizon, and juſt taking his leave of our Earth. To retard the departing Radiance, at leaſt to alleviate the approaching Loſs, thoſe weſtern Clouds catch the Rays; and reflect them to our View, in a moſt amuſing Diverſity of Colours. By this Means, We enjoy the great Luminary in *his Beams*, even when *his Orb* is withdrawn from our Sight.—An epiſtolary Correſpondence has ſomething of the ſame Nature. Letters may be called, the Talk of abſent Friends. By this Expedient, they communicate their Thoughts, even though Countries, Kingdoms, or Seas intercept their Speech. You muſt, therefore, promiſe me this Satisfaction. That I may converſe with my *Aſpaſio* by the

* John iii. 11.

the *Pen*, when I can no longer have an Intercourse with Him in *Perſon*.

Ap. You have anticipated me, *Theron*. Otherwiſe, what is now my Promiſe, would have been my Requeſt.

I cannot but take notice of another Particularity, in that magnificent Aſſemblage of Clouds. How they varied their Appearance, as the Lamp of Day changed its Situation.—A little while ago, thoſe Curtains of the Sky, were ſtreaked with Orange, or tinged with Amber. Preſently, they borrow the Bluſh of the Roſe, or the ſoftened Red of the Pink. Ere long, they glow with Vermilion, or deepen into Crimſon. Soon ſucceeds the Purple, more beautiful and grand than any imperial Robe; and as ſoon (thus tranſient is all ſublunary Grandeur!) gives place to the *ſable Veil* of Evening, or ſaddens into the *gloomy Pall* of Night.—Such, I truſt, will be the Iſſue of my *Theron's* preſent Apprehenſions. All his ſplendid Ideas of human Excellency and Self-righteouſneſs, will become faint; will loſe their imaginary Luſtre; till, at length, they fade away, and darken into abſolute *Self-abaſement*.—Then, the Grace of free Juſtification, will be amiable, will be deſirable, as the Beauties of the Dawn, breaking upon the Shades of Night. Then, You will make no Difficulty, to ſay with the Pſalmiſt and with the Apoſtle; *Bleſſed is the Man, unto whom GOD imputeth Righteouſneſs without Works* *.

* Rom. iv. 6.

A SERIES OF LETTERS.

LETTER I.

ASPASIO *to* THERON.

Dear THERON,

AM now at the Seat of my worthy Friend *Camillus*; where Buſineſs and Inclination will fix me for ſome Weeks. —This Evening we had a moſt pleaſing Ramble. I have met with nothing ſo agreeable, ſince I left your Houſe, and loſt your Company.

The Time was juſt arrived, and the Scene was fully opened, which furniſhed our great Poet with his fine Deſcription:

Now was the Sun in weſtern Cadence low;
From Noon; and gentle Airs, due at their Hour,
To fan the Earth now wak'd, and uſher in
The Evening cool.

At this Juncture, *Camillus* invited me to take the Air.—We walked, ſeveral Times, along a cloſe ſhady Alley, arched with the Foliage of *Filberts*. Here, hid from every Eye, and the whole World withdrawn from our View, We ſeemed like *Monks* ſtrolling in their Cloyſters.—Turning ſhort at the End, We enter a parallel Range of majeſtic and uniformly ſpreading *Walnut-trees*. This Tranſition, was ſomewhat like advancing, through a low Porch, into the Iſles of a magnificent *Cathedral*. The broad Leaf, and large Trunk, of thoſe lordly Trees—their very diffuſive Spread, added to their prodigious Height—give them an Air of uncommon Dignity. It ſwells the Imagination with vaſt Ideas, and entertains Us with a romantic Kind of Delight, to expatiate amidſt ſuch huge Columns, and under ſuch ſuperb Elevations, of living Architecture.

Quitting our Cathedral, We turn once again, and paſs into a grand Colonade of *Oaks*: ſo regular in their Situation, ſo ſimilar in their Size, and ſo remarkably correſpondent in every Circumſtance, that they looked like the *Twins* of Nature; not only belonging to the ſame Family, but produced at the ſame Birth.—Through theſe lay a Walk, ſtrait, ſpacious, and gracefully long. Far exceeding the laſt in the Extent of its Area, though much inferior in the Stateline ſs of its Cieling. It put me in mind of that divine Benignity, which has allowed Us the

Space of *ſix* Days, for the Proſecution of our own comparatively low Affairs; and ſet apart but *one* in ſeven, for the more immediate Attendance on the ſublime Duty of worſhipping our CREATOR.

This Walk was covered with the neateſt *Gravel*; and not a Weed to be ſeen, nor one Blade of Graſs, through the whole extended Surface. It ſtole into a continual Aſcent; yet ſo very gradually, that the Riſe was ſcarce diſcernable, either by the ſearching Eye, the toiling Feet, or the panting Breath.—At the Extremity, a handſome *Summer-houſe* ſhewed a Flight of Steps, and half a *Venetian* Door. The reſt of the Building was hid by the low-hung cluſtering Branches.

As ſoon as We enter the Apartment, *Camillus* throws open the Left-hand Saſh; and, with it, a moſt enlarged and amuſive *Proſpect*.—The Structure appeared ſituate on the Brow of a conſiderable Eminence. Whoſe Sides were partly confuſed and wild with broken Rocks, partly ſhagged and perplexed with thorny Shrubs. The Spectator is agreeably ſurpriſed, to find Himſelf accommodated with ſo *elegant* a Manſion, on the Summit of ſo *rude* and *ruinous* a Spot.—But, how greatly is his Surpriſe and his Satisfaction augmented, when he caſts his Eye forward; and beholds the beautiful *Meads*, which, from the Foot of this ragged Hill, ſtretch themſelves into a Space almoſt unmeaſurable!

Through the Midſt of this extenſive Vale, which was decked with the fineſt Verdure, and repleniſhed with the richeſt Herbage *, a *River* rolled its copious Flood,

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* ——————— *Planis*
Porrectus Spatiis, & multæ prodigus Herbæ.
HOR.

Flood. Rolled, in a thouſand ſerpentine *Meanders*; as though it was loth to leave the flowery Scene; and made repeated Efforts to prolong its Stay amidſt ſuch lovely Objects.—Till, at laſt, having loitered in its own Labyrinths, and wandered more than twice the Length * of the Meadows; having held a Mirror to the aſpiring Poplars, and bending Willows; having paid a welcome Salute to ſeveral ornamented *Villas*, and paſſed through the Arches of two or three curiouſly pendent Bridges; it ſeemed to meet the Sky, and mingle with the Horizon.

Oppoſite to the Front Window, a *Caſcade* fell from the adjacent Stream. It flaſhed and foamed along the broad Slope, indented with ſmall Pits, and jagged with protuberant Stones. The Current, vexed and embarraſſed, ſeemed to *rave* at the intervening Obſtacles; and forcing its rapid, indignant, ſonorous Way, ſtruck the Ear with a Peal of liquid Thunder. Theſe fretful Waters—let our *angry* Paſſions obſerve the Admonition, and follow the Example—ſoon forgot their Rage; ſoon recovered their Temper. Collected into a little Rivulet, they ran off in calm and ſilent Lapſe, till they loſt themſelves amongſt Beds of Oſier, and Plantations of Alder.

The River, widening as it flowed, was parted here and there by ſeveral little Iſlands. Scattered, as it were, by the Hand of Chance; and raiſing their green Heads in the Midſt of the lucid Stream; they preſented a moſt unexpected and moſt pleaſing Spectacle. Some of them were tufted with Reeds, and

* The River *Ouſe* in *Bedfordſhire*, by its multiplied Windings, makes a Space of *eighteen* Miles by Land, more than *eighty* by Water.

and ſurrounded with Rocks and Shoals, the unmoleſted Reſort of Swans. Some adorned with ſtately *Porticos*, and ſplendid *Alcoves*; the graceful Retreats of rural Pleaſure. One, larger than the reſt, ſeemed to be furniſhed with cool embowering Walks; fitted for ſtudious Retirement, or ſedate Contemplation.—On either Side of the charming Valley, Towns and Villages lay thick, and looked gay; adding Ornament and Variety to the Scene, and receiving innumerable Advantages from the paſſing Wave.

The Whole recalled to an attentive Obſerver's Mind, that amiable and auguſt Spectacle, which the *Syrian* * Soothſayer could not behold, without a Rapture of Delight;—*From the Top of the Rocks I ſee* the Tribes of JEHOVAH, *and from the Hills I behold* the Habitations of his choſen People. *How goodly are thy Tents, O Jacob! And thy Tabernacles, O Iſrael! As the Vallies, are they ſpread forth; as Gardens, by the River's Side: as Trees of exquiſite Fragrance* †, *which the LORD hath planted: as Cedars* of ſtatlieſt Growth, *flouriſhing beſide the Waters.*

We had but juſt looked about Us, when a Meſſenger came for *Camillus*. As He was called to ſettle ſome private Affairs, I choſe to ſtay in this inviting Retreat; and determined to make myſelf a-

* Numb. xxiii. 7.

† *Numb.* xxiv. 5, 6. It is well known, that the Word אהלים is uſed in the ſacred Writings, to denote either a *delightful Perfume*, Prov. vii. 17. or that *aromatic Plant*, which produces it, *Cant.* iv. 14.—For which Reaſon, I think it very juſtifiable, to render the Expreſſion, *Trees of exquiſite Fragrance*; and am perſuaded, it will be far more intelligible to the Generality of Readers, than *Trees of Lign-Aloes.*

mends for the Loſs of *Camillus*'s Company, by beginning a Correſpondence with my *Theron*.—We have Pen, Ink, and Paper, in all our rural Retirements; that, if any Thing is ſtarted in Diſcourſe, or occurs in Meditation, worthy to be remembered, it may immediately be committed to Writing.

I could not but obſerve to my Friend, that, fine as the Proſpect appeared, there was one Decoration wanting; if ſome *grand Deformity* may be called a Decoration. The Ridges of a bleak and barren Mountain, or the Skirts of a Sun-burnt tawny Heath, would give *additional Livelineſs*, to the ornamented Part of the Landſcape. Thus contraſted, their Beauties would acquire a new Charm, and ſtrike with double Vigour.—This Circumſtance would ſhew Us, what wretched Abodes and inhoſpitable Quarters might have fallen to our Share. And would probably awaken a more fervent Gratitude to the Supreme DISPOSER of Things; who has caſt *our* "Lot in a fairer Ground, and given "*us* a more goodly Heritage."

So, a proper Knowledge of the divine *Law*—of its ſublime Perfections, and rigorous Sanction—joined with a Conviction of our own extreme Deficiency, and manifold Tranſgreſſions—all this would endear the bleſſed *JESUS* to our Affections, and powerfully recommend his Righteouſneſs to our Deſires.—The Remainder of this Epiſtle, therefore, ſhall turn upon ſome Inſtances of Duty, enjoined in that ſacred Syſtem. *By which* it may be highly uſeful to examine our Conduct, and ſift our Hearts: *in which*, I believe, we have all fallen ſhort, and are all become guilty: *from which*, We may learn the Imperfection of our beſt Services, and ſee

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the inexpreſſible Need of a better Righteouſneſs than our own.

The Knowledge of GOD is the Foundation of all vital Religion, and indeed is the Conſummation of human Happineſs. It is not only Matter of preſent Duty, but the very Eſſence of our future Bliſs; *This is Life eternal, to know Thee the only true GOD, and JESUS CHRIST whom Thou haſt ſent* *. —Yet, important and obligatory as it is, are We not very defective in this divine Science? Have We duly acquainted Ourſelves with the marvelous Excellencies of the LORD JEHOVAH? His uncontroulable Power, and all-comprehending Wiſdom; his unbounded Goodneſs, and unwearied Patience; his immaculate Holineſs, and inflexible Juſtice; his never-failing Faithfulneſs, and inviolable Veracity?—Have We, according to the Direction of our *inſpired* Tutor, purſued this ſacred Study on our Knees †; and ſought this moſt noble of all intellectual Endowments, not merely from Books, but principally at the Throne of Grace. Have We ſought it, like that antient *Jewiſh* Student, with an early Application, and with inceſſant Aſſiduity; even "from the Flower, till the Grape was ripe ‡?"

Is that ſcanty Ray of Knowledge, which perhaps has forced itſelf through our original Darkneſs, *operative* on our Affections? Have We loved the LORD our GOD with all our Heart? This is the firſt and great Commandment ‖.—Have We conſtantly entertained the moſt magnificent and honourable Thoughts of his ſublime Perfections? Is our

* John xvii. 3. † James i. 5. ‡ Ecclus. li. 15.
‖ Matt. xxii. 38.

Esteem for this immensely great and most blessed BEING, high, superlative, matchless? Somewhat like *that*, expressed by the Psalmist; *Whom have I in Heaven but Thee? And there is None upon Earth, that I desire in comparison of Thee* *.—Have we been affectionately concerned for his *Glory*, and zealous to advance his holy Religion? Troubled, very sensibly troubled, when our MAKER's Honour has been trampled in the Dust, by licentious Tongues, or flagitious Deeds?

Have We made it our ruling Care, to approve the Whole of our Life, and the most secret Transactions of our Breast, to his all-seeing Eye? Resolved, deliberately resolved to sacrifice, not only our darling Lusts, but even our most valuable Interests, whenever they stand in competition with the good Pleasure of his Will?—In a Word; as the Hart panteth after the Water-brooks, with such *vehement* and *inextinguishable* Ardour, have We thirsted after—a brighter Manifestation of his divine Attributes—some sweeter Assurances of his special Love—and an ever-increasing Conformity to his holy Image?

Such was the Temper of those excellent Men, who are characterized in the Scriptures of Truth, as Children of the HIGHEST, and Patterns for our Imitation. This is their Language; *The Desire of our Soul is unto thy Name, and to the Remembrance of Thee. With my Soul have I desired Thee in the Night; yea, with my Spirit within me will I seek Thee early* †.—Neither is such Warmth of Love, and Fervour

* Psal. lxxiii. 25.

† *Isai.* xxvi. 8, 9. We can hardly tell, which to admire most, the *Beauty* of the Description, or the *Piety* of the Persons. *I have desired*; and not with inactive Wishes,

Fervour of Desire, any needless or extravagant Pitch of Devotion; but a *reasonable* Service, indispensibly due, from all intelligent Creatures, to the great AUTHOR of their Being—in whom all possible Perfections, with the utmost Exaltation and Dignity, reside—from whom all Manner of Blessings, in the most copious and never-failing Communications, flow.

When We receive, from an absent *Friend*, rich and repeated Presents; Casks of generous Wine, or Jars of delicious Fruit; We feel Ourselves inkindled into a grateful Affection. We honour, We love the Person, who allows Us such a distinguished Place in his Heart; and expresses his cordial Regard, by such a Series of active and tender Benevolence.—The Blessed GOD is a Friend to Us All, infinitely powerful, and equally munificent. We are the constant Objects of his *more than* friendly, of his parental Cares. Every passing Moment is a Messengen of his Patience, and charged with some Token of his Bounty. For *our* Sake, He has diffused Blessings over all the Face of the Earth; and commanded every Element to concur, in ministering to our Accommodation. He has not only adapted his Benefits to our several Wants; but has given them

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but such as prompt to vigorous Endeavours; *I will seek Thee.* And *early*, with the most vigilant Application and unwearied Assiduity.—The Emphasis is very much increased, by the Addition of those lively Words, *with my Soul, yea with my Spirit*; with the whole Bent and Sway of my Affections, and with the steady invariable Determination of my Judgment.—Thus *have I* desired Thee, even *in the Night*; when both the Pursuits and the Thoughts of other People, are sunk and lost in profound Repose. Thus *will I* seek Thee, with a Zeal—*early* as the rising—*constant* as the returning Sun.

a *Diverſification*, large as the Scope of our Wiſhes; and an *Enrichment*, far beyond all that our Fancy could conceive.—Profuſe Liberality! Yet ſmall and ſcanty, compared with his moſt adorable Benignity in *CHRIST JESUS*.

What? If GOD, willing to manifeſt the ſuper-abundant Riches of his Kindneſs, had made bare the Arm of his Omnipotence; and ſtruck a moſt miraculous Road through the Surges of the Ocean, to afford Us a ſafe Paſſage?—If, to accommodate Us in our Travels, He had brought Waters out of the flinty Rock; and bid the Ravens bring Meat to our Hands, bid the Winds convey Manna to our Doors?—If, to furniſh Us with a commodious Settlement, He had dethroned mighty Kings, diſpoſſeſſed populous Nations, and made the Walls of impregnable Cities fall to the Ground?—If, to further the Diſpatch of our Buſineſs, or facilitate the Conqueſt of our Enemies, He had arreſted the Sun in his meridian Career, and laid an Embargo upon the Moon, ſetting out on her nightly Tour?—In ſhort, if to promote our Welfare, He had ſuſpended the Powers, and controuled the Laws of univerſal Nature; had wrought *all* the Miracles, exhibited in the Land of *Egypt*, or recorded in the Volumes of Inſpiration—Should We not think Ourſelves under the moſt inviolable Engagements, to love the LORD our GOD, *Who had done ſo great Things for Us*; to love Him unfeignedly and ardently; to love Him with a ſupreme Affection, far above every other amiable Object?—Yet, We have greater, incomparably greater Obligations to our Almighty BENEFACTOR. For (hear O Heavens! wonder O Earth! and let Eternity dwell upon the ſtupendous

pendous Truth!) *GOD spared not his SON—his own SON*—his transcendently glorious and divinely excellent SON—*but delivered him up* to the deepest Humiliation, and to the most accursed Death, *for Us* Men and our Salvation.

O, *Theron!* Have We been impressed with *Wonder*, at the Contemplation of this Goodness? Have our Hearts glowed with *Gratitude*, under a Sense of these Mercies? Surely, No Man need be convicted of any other Crime, at the great Tribunal, than Insensibility of such Love, and Ingratitude for such Favours. This, without the Accession of horrid Impieties, is enough to leave Him absolutely inexcusable. This is enough to prove Him one of the most *disingenuous*, and most *detestable* of Creatures.

Have We exercised Ourselves in frequent *Thanksgiving?* Many are the Exhortations to this honourable Duty. *Praise thy GOD, O Sion*: Praise Him for his mighty Acts †:—Praise Him according to his excellent Greatness ‡.*—Innumerable are the Incitements to abound in this pleasant Service. Every Comfort has a Voice, and cries in the Ear of Reason; *O! that Men would therefore praise the LORD for his Goodness.*

* Psal. cxlvii. 12. † Psal. cl. 2.

‡ Among these Exhortations, We may rank that beautiful and devout Address to GOD, יושב תהלות ישראל Psal. xxii. 3. *Thou that inhabitest*—Light inaccessible, shall I say? The Regions of Immensity, or the Ages of Eternity? No; but what is a more exalted Character—*The Praises of Israel.* Finely signifying, that Praise is a most acceptable Sacrifice; which the Divine MAJESTY vouchsafes to regard with peculiar Delight.—Intimating also, that the Exercise of Praise should not be an occasional Thing, like a *transient Visit* to a Stranger's House; but a daily and almost unintermitted Service, like the *stated Residence* of a Person in his own Habitation.

Goodneſs. Every Deliverance enforces the Addreſs, and furniſhes freſh Materials for the heavenly Employ.—The Man after GOD's own Heart declares, as an inviting Example for our Practice; *I will bleſs the LORD at all Times: His Praiſe ſhall continually be in my Mouth* *: *Yea, as long as I have any Being, I will ſing Praiſes unto my GOD* †.—Indeed, when We conſider the inexhauſtibly rich Bounty of GOD our CREATOR, and the inconceivably tender Mercy of GOD our REDEEMER, it is both ſtrange and deplorable, that the Love of GOD is not always prevailing in our Hearts, and the Language of Praiſe ever flowing from our Lips.

I will not ſuppoſe our Character ſo irreligious, that We have neglected the daily Worſhip of GOD, either in our Cloſet, or in our Family.—But, have we prayed with that profound *reverential Awe*, which is due to the HIGH and LOFTY ONE, *who inhabiteth Eternity?*—Have We made our Supplications with that *fervent Importunity*, which may, in ſome meaſure correſpond with the extreme Indigence of our State, and the invaluable Worth of the Bleſſings We crave?—Have our Petitions been attended with that *ſteady Affiance*, which may glorify the Goodneſs, the Power, the Veracity of the LORD? May evidently declare, That He *is rich in Mercy, to All that call upon Him* ‡: that He *is the LORD JEHOVAH, in whom is everlaſting Strength* ‖: that He *is the GOD of Truth, and faithful for ever* §. We call Him FATHER: but have We truſted in Him, with that unſuſpecting, chearful, filial Confidence, which a Child repoſes on the Fidelity and Indul-

* Pſal. xxxiv. 1. † Pſal. cxlvi. 2. ‡ Rom. x. 12. ‖ Iſai. xxvi. 4. § Deut. xxxii. 4.

Indulgence of such an earthly Relative? Have We not entertained, too often entertained narrow, dishonourable, beggarly Apprehensions, concerning the Treasures of his Liberality, and the Bowels of his Pity? Rating them even lower than our Parent's, our Friend's, or our own.

Have We been careful to carry the Spirit of our Prayers into our *ordinary* Conversation; and waited at the Door, as well as approached to the Throne of Grace?—Amidst the Intervals of our solemn Devotions, have We cultivated an *ejaculatory* Intercourse with Heaven? How highly would the ambitious Courtier *prize*, and how frequently would He *use* a privy Key, which should give Him, at all Hours, free Admittance to his Sovereign. This Key of Admittance, only to an infinitely more exalted POTENTATE, We all possess in the Practice of mental Aspirations to GOD.—It is certainly the noblest Employ, and will be the richest Improvement of our Thoughts, to send them in such short Embassies to the KING of Kings; and to derive, by such occasional Sallies * of Faith, a renewed Supply from

* We have, in Scripture, very remarkable Instances of the Success, which has attended *ejaculatory Prayer*.—Observe *Nehemiah*: He stands before *Ahasuerus*, apprehensive of the Monarch's Displeasure, yet desirous to solicit Him in Behalf of *Jerusalem*. To be delivered from his Fears, and to obtain his Desires, what Method does He use? The mean and servile Arts of Flattery? No; but the manly and devout Expedient of Prayer. *I prayed*, says the Patriot, *to the GOD of Heaven*.—We cannot suppose, that He fell on His Knees, or spoke with His Lips, while He continued in the royal Presence. But he darted up his Soul in *silent* Supplication. Which Supplication "pierced the Clouds;" reached the eternal Throne; and returned not again till a Blessing was sent.

Such

from the Fountain of all Good. How great a *Loſs* then muſt it be to our ſpiritual Intereſts, and how contemptuous a *Diſregard* of the ever-preſent JEHOVAH,

Such as totally averted the Wrath, He dreaded; and procured Favour and Aſſiſtance, much larger than He expected: *Nehem.* ii. 4.

When *David* heard, that *Ahitophel*, the ableſt Politician in his Kingdom, was revolted to *Abſalom*; ſenſible what a Loſs his Affairs had ſuſtained, and what an Advantage the rebellious Party had acquired, He betook himſelf to his GOD. He ſtaid not for an Opportunity of Retirement, but inſtantly and upon the Spot cried; *O LORD, I pray Thee, turn the Counſel of Ahitophel into Fooliſhneſs!* —A *ſhort* Addreſs, but very *efficacious*. HE, who diſappointeth the Devices of the Crafty, ſent a Spirit of Infatuation among the Rebels; and inclined them to reject the Advice of that judicious Stateſman. Which falſe Step brought upon their horrid Enterprize, the Ruin it deſerved; and chagrined the wretched Traitor, even to Rage, Frenzy, and Suicide. 2 *Sam.* xv. 31. xvii. 23.

Amyntor, at a memorable Period of his Life, was under great Diſtreſs of Conſcience, and haraſſed by violent Temptations. He made his Caſe known to an experienced Friend; who ſaid, *Amyntor, You do not pray.*—Surpriſed at this, He replied; "I pray, if ſuch a Thing be "poſſible, too much. I can hardly tell, how many Times "in the Day, I bow my Knee before GOD; almoſt "to the Omiſſion of my other Duties, and the Neglect "of my neceſſary Studies."—"You miſtake my Mean-"ing, dear *Amyntor*. I do not refer You to the Cere-"mony of the *Knee*, but to the Devotion of the *Heart*. "Which neglects not *any* Buſineſs, but intermingles "Prayer with *all*. Which, in every Place, looks unto "the LORD; and, on every Occaſion, lifts up an in-"digent longing Soul for the Supply of his Grace. This "(added He, and ſpoke with a peculiar Vehemence) "*this* is the Prayer which all the Devils in *Hell* cannot "withſtand."—This, I would farther obſerve, is the Prayer, which brings down ſomewhat of *Heaven* into the Heart; in which I would myſelf deſire to abound; and would earneſtly recommend, to all my Acquaintance, and all my Readers.

HOVAH, to omit entirely, or long to diſcontinue, this moſt beneficial Practice of habitual Adoration? —Can You, my dear *Theron*, acquit Yourſelf on this Article of Enquiry? Has not every Day of your Life been a Day of Negligence in this Reſpect? Been a perpetual Diſobedience to our SAVIOUR's Injunction; *Men ought, in this Manner, always to pray, and not to faint* *.

Have We ſanctified the *Sabbath?* Has the LORD's Day, with all its ſolemn and ſacred Offices, been our Delight?—Have We remembered that diſtinguiſhed Portion of our Time, as *Jacob* remembered the delightful Interview at *Peniel?* Have We expected it, as Merchants expect the Arrival of a richly laden Veſſel? Have We improved it, as Huſbandmen improve the ſhining Hours of the Harveſt?—Have We wholly laid aſide every earthly Engagement; *not ſpeaking our own Words* †, nor allowing Ourſelves in any Gratifications, which may interrupt our Communion with the FATHER of Spirits? Has *one Day in his Courts been preferable to a Thouſand* ‡, ſpent either in the Works of our Calling, or in the Scenes of Recreation?—Have the Memorials of our REDEEMER's dying Merits, and the Seals of his unchangeable Loving-kindneſs, been reliſhed as a Feaſt, and prized as a Portion?

Have We honoured GOD's holy *Word?*—What greater Mark of Diſeſteem, than to deſpiſe a Perſon's Diſcourſe; and not to think his Speech worthy of our Notice? Eſpecially, when He addreſſes Us with very great Serioufneſs, and with the utmoſt Affection. In our Bible, the GOD of Glory ſpeaks to his

* Luke xviii. 1. † Iſai. lviii. 13. ‡ Pſal. lxxxiv. 10.

his Creatures; ſpeaks with the moſt perſuaſive Energy, and with all the Yearnings of parental Tenderneſs. Have We liſtened to our CREATOR, with Reverence and Delight; and rejoiced with Trembling at—*Thus ſaith the LORD?*

Have We ſearched the Oracles of Truth, not merely as *Scholars*, but as *Sinners*; not from a Spirit of Curioſity, or with an Air of Formality, but with a Solicitude and Ardour, becoming Perſons who enquire after the SAVIOUR of their loſt Souls? Have We ſubmitted our inmoſt Thoughts to their impartial Scrutiny; to receive Conviction of Sin from their awful Remonſtrances, and to hear the Sentence of Condemnation at their righteous Bar?—Have We been willing to ſuffer the Reproach of *conſcious Baſeneſs*, while they have ripped up the Diſguiſes of Falſhood; laid open our ſecret Iniquities; and brought all our evil Ways to Remembrance? Thus *Joſiah* acted. *His Heart was tender, and He humbled Himſelf before the LORD; He rent his Clothes, and wept before the LORD; when He heard the Words of the Book of the Law.**.

Have We hid the glad Tidings of the Goſpel, within our Memories, within our Hearts? Have We been diligent to ſuck this *Honeycomb* † of Grace, by concomitant Meditation, and ſubſequent Prayer?—Have We valued the precious Promiſes, as Gentlemen of Wealth value the Writings of their private Eſtates; or as enfranchiſed Bodies eſteem the Charter of their public Privileges?—Have We, like the princely Patriarch, longed for thoſe Words of *Edification, Exhortation and Comfort*, more than for our neceſſary

* 2 Chron. xxxiv. 27. † Cant. v. 1.

neceſſary Food *? And, like the royal Prophet, prevented the Night-watches, that We may be occupied in thoſe Statutes † and Ordinances of Heaven?

We have hitherto confined the Examination, to a few Inſtances of the *affirmative* Kind; how dreadfully will the dark Account be ſwelled, if, inſtead of Love and Obedience, there be Hatred and Oppoſition—*Hatred* of the Name, Glory, and Worſhip of GOD—*Oppoſition* to his Intereſt, Kingdom, and Service!

GOD is *infinite Perfection:* worthy of all Admiration: exalted above all Praiſe. Yet do not our Thoughts more frequently, or more naturally turn upon our own Accompliſhments, than upon the illuſtrious and ſhining Attributes of the ALMIGHTY? This is, in itſelf, the moſt ſhameful *Dotage*; and, in GOD's Sight, the moſt abominable *Idolatry*. Yet, let Us obſerve, and We ſhall probably find, that, as Damps ariſe in the Mines, or Fogs in the fenny Grounds, ſo naturally, and ſo copiouſly do theſe ſelf-admiring Reflections ariſe in our depraved Minds.

GOD is an *everlaſting King*. Have We not often reſiſted his Authority, by open Diſobedience; often diſputed it, by ſecret Murmuring? Have We not, as far as in Us lay, depoſed the omnipotent SOVEREIGN, and exalted *Self* into the Throne? Made Self-will our Law, and Self-pleaſing our End? Thus adding Sacrilege to Rebellion?

GOD is tranſcendently *gracious* and *amiable*.—Amiable as He is, have We not too often ſpurned Him from our Affections, by being *Lovers of Pleaſure*,

* Job xxiii. 12. † Pſal. cxix. 148.

ſure, more than Lovers of GOD ***? Gracious as He is, have We not too long turned our Backs upon Him, by forgetting his Benefits; being inſenſible of his Preſence; and not having ſo much as a real Deſire to ſerve or glorify Him? O! how common, yet how heinous, is this Iniquity! It is a total Departure from the great End of our Exiſtence. It renders our whole Life one continual Sin. Nay, it is a Complication of Sins; it is *every* Tranſgreſſion in Embrio. What is the Stubbornneſs of careſſed Children, and the Negligence of entruſted Servants? What is the Indifference and Diſdain of obliged Dependants? What the Deceit and Treachery of choſen Favourites? Is not each of theſe Practices, odious, vile, provoking? Yet they are all included in that one grand Evil, an habitual Forgetfulneſs of the bleſſed GOD.

Awake, Conſcience! Summoned and charged as Thou art, in Behalf of thy ſupreme LORD, bear an impartial Teſtimony. Then, I am perſuaded, the *Phariſee* in our Breaſts, like the Man unfurniſhed with the Wedding-garment, muſt be ſpeechleſs and confounded; muſt ſtand ſelf-convicted and ſelf-condemned.

Is our Heart warm with *brotherly Love*?—Good-manners will put Expreſſions of Civility into our Mouths; but has a Power from on High implanted the royal Law of Charity in our Breaſts? The Character of a Gentleman requires a Deportment acceſſible, obliging, and courteous: has the Spirit of *Chriſtianity* taught Us to love, *not in Word* or plauſible Appearance only, *but in Deed and in Truth* †?—Do

* 2 Tim. iii. 4. † 1 John iii. 18.

Do We love our Neighbours, not merely on account of ſome Relation they bear Us, or ſome Services they have done Us? But, becauſe they are Creatures of the bleſſed GOD; are the Objects of his providential Care; and capable at leaſt of being conformed to his Image? Do We love them, becauſe We hope, that the *LORD JESUS CHRIST* has bought them with his Blood; and has made, or will make them Partakers of his SPIRIT, and Members of his Myſtical Body?

Are We ſincerely concerned for their Credit and Intereſt; for their preſent Welfare, and eternal Happineſs? Do We embrace all Opportunities of promoting, both the one, and the other? Embrace them with the *ſame* Alacrity, and improve them with the ſame Zeal, which actuate Us in purſuing *our own* Felicity?—If they exceed Us in all that is amiable, and all that is proſperous, do We contemplate their ſuperior Excellence with a real Complacency, and their more abundant Succeſs with a real Satisfaction? Is *Selfiſhneſs*, that exorbitant Encroacher, kept within Bounds; and do We *ſeek, not* barely *our own, but another's Wealth?*

Do We diſlike to hear, and abhor to ſpread, defamatory Tales; even when our Adverſaries are the Men, whom they tend to blacken?—When rudely affronted, or cauſeleſly abuſed, do We pity the Offenders, for the *Wrong* done to their own Souls; rather than kindle into Reſentment, at the *Indignity* offered to Ourſelves?—When greatly injured, are We ſlow to Anger, and not eaſily provoked? Are We much more willing to be reconciled, than to foment Diſpleaſure, and proſecute Revenge? In a Word; do We *love our Enemies; bleſs them, that curſe*

curſe Us; do Good to them, that hate Us: and pray for them, which deſpitefully uſe Us, and perſecute Us *? —Without this loving and lovely Diſpoſition, *We abide*, ſays the Apoſtle, *in Death* †; are deſtitute of ſpiritual, and have no Fitneſs for eternal Life.

Let me add—Are all our Graces, and all our Works, *clothed with Humility*? This ſhould be the Dreſs, in which they ſeverally appear; as well as the Bond of Connection, which unites them all ‡.—Do We maintain a very low Opinion of our own Accompliſhments, and *in Honour prefer Others to Ourſelves* ‖? Habitually ſenſible, that We are leſs than the leaſt of the divine Mercies, and the very chiefeſt of Sinners?

I might eaſily have branched out all the protracting Subjects, into a much greater Variety of interrogatory Articles. But I intend only to preſent You with a Specimen. Your own Meditations will enlarge the Sketch, and ſupply what is defective. Only let me beg of You, my dear Friend, to try your State by this Touchſtone; to prove your Conduct by this Standard. And may the FATHER of Lights give You an Underſtanding, to diſcern the

* *Matt. v. 44. What Manner of Love is this?* How diſintereſted! how extenſive! how triumphant! Muſt not all the boaſted *Benevolence* of the Philoſopher and Moraliſt, ſtrike Sail to this evangelical Charity? Muſt not both Moraliſt and Philoſopher acknowledge the Neceſſity of a *divine* Operation, thus to enlarge, exalt, and refine their ſocial Affections?

† 1 John iii. 14.

‡ 1 *Pet.* v. 5. *Dreſs, Bond*—The unuſual Word ἐγκομβώσασθε is ſuppoſed to have *both* theſe Significations.

‖ Rom. xii. 10.

the exact Purity and sublime Perfection of his holy Law!

Have You lived in the *uninterrupted* Observance of all these Duties; avoiding whatever is forbidden, and obeying whatever is commanded? Your outward Behaviour, I know, has been free from notorious Violations; but has your inward Temper been preserved, from all ungodly Motions, and from every irregular Desire? Is there no Enmity in your Heart to any of the Precepts; nor any Backwardness, nor any Failure, in performing each and every Injunction?

When You put these Questions to Yourself, remember; That every Sin is a Contempt of Infinite Majesty, and supreme Authority. That every Sin pollutes the Soul, and renders it a Kind of Hell; is a Departure from GOD, and an Imitation of the Devil. That the Wages due to every Sin, is eternal Death[*]; and the Doom denounced on every Sinner, is an everlasting Curse.—Remember; That if You fail in *one* Point, or in *any* Degree, You are guilty of all. Nay; if your Conformity be not *persevering* as well as *perfect*, You incur the Penalty, and are abandoned to Condemnation.—UNLESS, renouncing all your *personal* Performances, You place your whole Affiance on a SAVIOUR's Atonement, and a SAVIOUR's Righteousness.

I think, You will not dare to put the Issue of your everlasting State upon the former Footing. Which is not only hazardous, but must be inevitably ruinous. You will infinitely rather choose, to acknowledge Yourself a poor Insolvent; and plead the unsearchable Riches of your REDEEMER's

[*] James ii. 10. Gal. iii. 10.

Obedience; and rely on the unparalleled Merit of your REDEEMER's Blood.

To those who believe, the Law, though *strict*, is not *terrible*. Because, be its Precepts of Holiness ever so extensive, they have been most completely fulfilled by their glorious SURETY. Be its penal Sanctions ever so rigorous, they have been satisfied to the utmost, by their great MEDIATOR.—Believers, therefore, may make their Boast of their adorable SPONSOR. They may *sit under his Shadow with great Delight* *. While the Thunderings of Mount *Sinai*, and all the Terrors of the legal Dispensation, tend only to increase and quicken the refreshing Sense of their Safety. Just as the Possessor of a plentiful Estate, in some peaceful and prosperous Country, reposes Himself under the Shade of his Vine, or the Shelter of his Fig-tree; and, hearing of the *Wars* which embroil, or the *Plagues* which depopulate other Nations, tastes, with augmented Relish, his own Felicity.

Let me close with the affectionate and emphatical Wish of an inspired epistolary Writer. That *the LORD of Peace may give* my dear Theron *Peace —always—by all Means* †! *Then* I shall think, my Wishes are accomplishing, and this Blessing is at the Door, when He sees the *Purity* of the divine Law—sees the *Depravity* of his own Nature—and the *Impossibility* of being justified, without an Interest in the great MEDIATOR's Righteousness. That Righteousness, which, as it is the only Hope, and the constant Joy, is therefore the darling Theme, of

Your ever faithful

ASPASIO.

P. S.

* Cant. ii. 3. † 2 Thess. iii. 16.

P.S. Shall I *abridge* the preceding Letter, and contract the Whole into thoſe two great Commandments, which made the firſt awakening Impreſſions on my own Mind? *Thou ſhalt love the* LORD *thy* GOD *with* ALL *thy Heart: Thou ſhalt love thy Neighbour as* THYSELF. —Amazing! ſaid your *Aſpaſio*. Are *theſe* the Commands of GOD? As obligatory, as the Prohibition of Adultery, or the Obſervation of the Sabbath? Then has my whole Life been a *continual Act* of Diſobedience. Not a Day, no, nor an Hour, in which I have performed my Duty.—This Conviction ſtruck me, as the Hand-writing upon the Wall ſtruck the preſumptuous Monarch.—It purſued me, as *Saul* purſued the *Chriſtians*, not only to my own Houſe, but even to diſtant Cities.—Nor ever gave up the great Controverſy, till, under the Influences of the SPIRIT, it brought me *weary* and *heavy laden to* JESUS CHRIST.

LETTER II.

THERON *to* ASPASIO.

Dear ASPASIO,

MORE than three Weeks are elapſed, ſince You favoured me with your improving Company. During which Interval, I have frequently

recollected the moſt material Parts of our late Diſcourſes. I have carefully conſidered, both the Doctrines You advanced, and the Anſwers You returned to my ſeveral Objections.—I have often reviewed your valuable Letter; have uſed it as a *Touch-ſtone*, to examine my State; and have, with great Punctuality, obſerved your parting Advice.—I have ſat, every Evening, for a *Picture* of my *Mind*; and have endeavoured to take a true unflattering Draught of all its diſtinguiſhing Qualities. And, if the Diary is a faithful Mirror, if it does not aggravate the Deformity of my Features, I ſhall be abſolutely out of Conceit with myſelf: I ſhall ever entertain the *meaneſt* Opinion of my own, either moral or religious Qualifications.

Where is that intenſe and ſupreme *Love* of GOD, which his tranſcendent Perfections challenge, and his ineffable Goodneſs claims?—Where that firm and joyful *Reliance* on *CHRIST JESUS*, in any Degree proportioned to his infinite Merits and inviolable Promiſes?—Where that cordial and tender Affection for my *Fellow-chriſtians*, which is due to the Servants of a Divine REDEEMER; the People whom He ranſomed by his Agonies, and purchaſed with his very Blood?—Where is the Incenſe of holy Contemplation and refined Deſire? Where the Flame of fervent Devotion and ever active Zeal? Such as become the *living Temple* of GOD, in which his moſt immaculate and glorious SPIRIT vouchſafes to reſide.—Theſe fundamental Graces, like the grand Organs in the animal Syſtem, ſhould impart Health to the Soul, and ſpread the Beauty of Holineſs through all the Converſation. But theſe, alas! far from beating with

a *vigorous* and *uniform* Pulse, hardly heave with Life; only just struggle, now and then, with some faint, intermitted, uneven Throws.

How seldom do my Actions spring from Gratitude to the everlasting BENEFACTOR, be aim at the Glory of his super-excellent MAJESTY! —In addressing the KING immortal, invisible, how languid are my Affections, and how wandering is my Attention? How great my Unbelief, and how little my reverential Awe?—I receive innumerable Mercies; but where are my Returns of correspondent Thankfulness? I am visited with many gracious Chastisements; but without proper Resignation, or due Improvement.—Alas for my heartless Devotions, my lifeless Virtues, and their Multitude of my *refined Iniquities!*—Hid behind the Mask of outward Decency, and some customary Forms of Religion, I was altogether unacquainted with my spiritual State. I fancied myself *rich, and increased with Goods, and to have Need of Nothing:* even while I was *wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked* *.

If I look back, and review the Years of Youth and Manhood, what has been the Tenour, what is the Aspect of my Life? More like a desolate and horrid Wilderness, than a cultivated Garden, or a fruitful Vineyard.—In *Youth*, what sordid Gratifications of Appetite! In *Manhood*, what base Compliances with a wicked World! In *both*, what Shoals of evil Inclinations have polluted my Heart! What Swarms of vain Imaginations have debased my Thoughts! What frothy and unprofitable Words have dropt from my Lips!—By all which, how have I

* Rev. iii. 17.

I disobeyed, and how dishonoured GOD! How have I denied, and how crucified the *LORD JESUS CHRIST!*—And yet suppose myself, all the while, to be *good enough!*

It is something unaccountable, that a Person of my inquisitive Disposition, should, through the Course of so many Years, be such an utter *Stranger* to Himself. I wonder at my own *preposterous* Folly!—To travel into foreign Countries, and visit the most renowned Cities of *Europe*; yet never step over the Threshold, nor look within the Apartments of my own Breast.—To carry on a Correspondence with my Friends, even in the remotest Nations; and never enter upon a Conference, nor hold any Intelligence with my own Heart!—To enquire after News from the Fleet, News from the Army, News from the Court; yet exercise neither Curiosity nor Care, with regard to the Hope of Heaven, and the Concerns of Eternity!—What egregious Misconduct is this! A most pernicious Error, in the Oeconomy of religious Life.

Sometimes, I have cast a transient Glance on my *outward* Behaviour; but never extended my Search to the Delinquent, the Traitor, the Rebel *within*.—And even my outward Behaviour has been surveyed, with as much erroneous Partiality, as superficial Levity. It has been compared, not with that *exact* and *sublime* Standard, the Scriptures of Truth; but, as in the Case of the self-deceiving *Pharisee*, with the unjust, extortionate, adulterous Practices of some other People. From whence I most unwarrantably concluded, That, being not quite so abandoned as the most profligate Creatures, my Character must be good, and my Condition safe.—But, Thanks to

your

your laſt friendly Letter, and the ſearching Expedient it recommended, I am now in a different Way of Thinking.

It is ſtrange to recollect, and indeed it is ſhameful to confeſs, the many *Artifices* which I have uſed, to put a *Cheat* upon myſelf.—Sometimes, I have fanſied, that the divine Law could never be ſo ſtrict, as to condemn Us inexorably, only becauſe We continue not in all its Precepts.—Sometimes, I have pleaded the Infirmity of our Nature, and endeavoured to make the Works of Darkneſs appear only as pitiable Failings.—Sometimes I have taken Refuge in the Excellency of our Church, and plumed myſelf with the borrowed Feathers of a religious Profeſſion.—At other Times, I have ſoothed my Conſcience to Reſt, by a Punctuality of Attendance on Places, or a zealous Attachment to Forms. And all this, to ſeduce, cajole, and betray myſelf—betray myſelf, firſt into a vain *Conceit* of my own Endowments; then into a contemptuous *Diſregard* of *CHRIST*; and at laſt into eternal *Deſtruction*.—But now I ſee my Guilt; I apprehend my Danger; and feel my helpleſs Condition.

Indeed, my *Aſpaſio*, I am now convinced, that the darkeſt Colours cannot be too dark, for the Pourtrait of my ſpiritual State. I ſee myſelf overſpread with an habitual Depravity, and cannot forbear crying out, with the abaſhed Leper; *Unclean! Unclean* *!—The ſacred Oracles in no wiſe miſrepreſent fallen Man, when they deſcribe Him as *altogether become abominable* †. They are far from under-rating human Works, when they denominate them *filthy Rags*.

* Levit. xiii. 45. † Job xv. 16.

*Rags**. *Rags* they are, if We conſider their great Imperfection; *filthy* Rags, if We advert to their manifold

* *Iſai.* lxiv. 6. Does not *Theron* miſapply this Text? Can it be intended to diſcredit the Qualifications of the *Upright?* Is it not rather a Brand ſet upon the Works of the *Wicked*; whoſe very "Sacrifices are an Abomina-"tion to the LORD?" Or, a Rebuke given to the ſpecious Performances of the *Hypocrite*; who is preciſe in the Form, but deſtitute of the Power of Godlineſs? Or, may it not refer to *ritual* Obſervances; in Contradiſtinction to moral Duties, and ſpiritual Endowments?

The diſparaging Character muſt not, I think, be confined to ritual Obſervances; becauſe it is expreſly ſaid, ALL *our Righteouſneſſes*; of every Kind; be what they will; no Exception is made.—Neither can it be appropriated to the *formal* Hypocrite, much leſs to the *notoriouſly* Wicked; becauſe, thoſe very Perſons, who are the Subject of this Aſſertion, declare in the Context; *LORD, We are thy People; Thou art our FATHER; We ſhall be ſaved.*—So that it ſeems intended, not ſo much to ſtigmatize any particular Behaviour, as to *ſtain the Pride of all* human *Glory*.

Beſides; the Prophet ſpeaks of *himſelf*; WE *all are as an unclean Thing*. Which, however ſtrange or unreaſonable it may appear, is the very ſame Charge, to which He pleads guilty in another Place; *Wo is me! I am undone! For I am a Man of unclean Lips!* Not that He was defiled with any groſs Pollutions; nay, He was a Saint of the moſt diſtinguiſhed Luſtre; but *his Eyes had ſeen the KING, the LORD of Hoſts*. He was under the clear Manifeſtations of a GOD, glorious in Holineſs, inflexible in Juſtice, and infinite in all Perfections.—Amidſt theſe Manifeſtations, the Impurity of his Heart and Nature, were not only apparent, but glaring; ſuch as overwhelmed Him with Abaſhment, and, till CHRIST was applied in a Type (*Iſai.* vi. 7.) filled Him with Terror.

In *ſuch* Circumſtances, and under *ſuch* Views, all our moral Virtues and evangelical Graces, all our Exerciſes of Devotion and Acts of Charity, muſt neceſſarily appear both defective and polluted. By no means proportioned

to

manifold Defilements. And, since the Nature of GOD is irreconcileably averse to all Contamination; since the Law of GOD requires unspotted Perfection; O! *Who can stand before this holy LORD GOD* *, in any Accomplishments of his own?

When I farther reflect, that I have only a very obscure Glimpse of the divine Purity, and am a mere Novice in the Knowledge of my own Heart; how am I amazed at the lofty Apprehensions which I once formed, concerning the *Dignity* of my Nature, and the *Integrity* of my Conduct! All owing to Ignorance, the grossest Ignorance of myself and the Scriptures.—How do I shudder to think, that in expecting Justification from the Law, I was resting the Welfare of my immortal Soul, not on the Strength of a Rock, but on the Point of a Dagger.—I was going to the decisive Tribunal, flushed with the falsest Hopes, and charged with a Set of glittering Sins: going, like poor deluded *Uriah* †, not with any valid Credentials, but with *the Ministration of Death* ‡ in my Hand.

Though to the Demands of the Law, nor sufficient for our Recommendation to the Supreme LAWGIVER—no more than a few *tattered* Rags, can claim the Character, or perform the Services of a complete Suit—no more than a few *filthy* Rags are fit, to dress the Bride for her Nuptials, or the Courtier for a Birth-night.

But there *is* a Righteousness—blessed be divine Grace! —spotlessly pure and consummately excellent: a Righteousness, which answers all that the CREATOR requires, and supplies all that the Creature needs: to prove this momentous Point, and to display this unspeakable Gift, is the Design of the following Sheets.

* 1 Sam. vi. 20. † 2 Sam. xi. 14, 15.
‡ 2 Cor. iii. 9.

Though I cannot but acknowledge the Arrogance of these Pretensions, yet loth, very loth is my Pride, to renounce the pleasing Absurdity. Self-love and Self-importance has searched, and searched again, for something excellent. They can hardly brook the Humiliation, of imploring all *sub Formâ Pauperis* *. With what Reluctance is a Sinner brought to confess Himself, sinful in every Duty, sinful in every Capacity! Strange Perverseness!—But the Charge is undeniable. However unwilling, I must plead guilty. THOU ART WEIGHED IN THE BALANCES †, AND FOUND WANTING ‡, is written on all I *am*, all I *have*, all I *do*.—If I am thus defective, even in my own Estimation; if I am utterly condemned, at the Bar of my own Conscience; *What then shall I do, when GOD riseth up?*

* That is, under the Character of a *poor Destitute*, or as a Beggar sues for his Alms.

† *Weighed in the Balance*—As the following Story may serve to illustrate this fine Expression, and enforce the momentous Sentiment, the Reader will permit me to relate it.

In the Reign of King *Charles* I. the Goldsmiths of *London* had a Custom, to weigh several Sorts of their precious Metal, before the Privy Council. On this Occasion they made use of Scales, poised with such exquisite Nicety, that the Beam would turn (the Master of the Company affirmed) at the two hundredth Part of a Grain. *Noy*, the famous Attorney General, standing by and hearing this, replied; *I should be loth them to know all my Actions weighed in those Scales.* With whom I heartily concur, in relation to myself. And since the Balances of the Sanctuary, the Balances in GOD's Hand, are infinitely more exact; O! what Need have We of the Merits and Righteousness of CHRIST, to make Us acceptable in his Sight, and passable in his Esteem!

‡ Dan. v. 17.

up? And when HE visiteth, what shall I answer Him ?*

I now see the *Necessity* of an imputed Righteousness. Without some such Object for my Trust, I am undone. I long therefore to hear your *Arguments* in its Behalf. And I must declare to You, if it can be satisfactorily proved from the Scriptures, it is the most comfortable Doctrine in the World, and worthy of all Acceptation.

A Letter upon this Subject, would be a singular Favour, and, I hope, an equal Blessing to

Your obliged, and affectionate,

THERON.

LETTER III.

ASPASIO *to* THERON.

Dear THERON,

THOUGH all all your Letters give me Pleasure, none was ever so highly pleasing, as your last. I look upon it with the same secret Joy, as a compassionate Physician observes some *very favourable* Symptoms, in the Crisis of a beloved Patient's Distemper.

What You ask, I shall, without any farther Preface, attempt to execute. If my Attempt proves satisfactory

* Job xxxi. 14.

ſatisfactory to your Judgment, I am ſure, it will be the moſt likely Means, of *healing* your Conſcience, and *calming* your Fears.—When We perceive the odious Depravity of our Nature; when We diſcern the horrible Iniquity of our Lives; and are ſenſible of that tremendous Wrath, and everlaſting Vengeance, which are due to ſuch guilty Creatures: *then* nothing can be found, that will ſpeak effectual Peace, nothing that will adminiſter ſolid Comfort, but only the vicarious Sufferings, and the imputed Righteouſneſs of *JESUS CHRIST*.

To this Purpoſe one of the wiſeſt and beſt of ſpiritual Guides expreſſes Himſelf; *Has Sin abounded?* As undoubtedly it has, in our Heart, and our Life: *Grace has much more abounded*, in the Obedience, and the Merits of our REDEEMER.—Nay, *has Sin reigned?* Exerted its malignant Power, in the moſt extenſive and moſt deſtructive Manner; rendering Us ſubject *unto Death*, both temporal and eternal? *Even ſo has Grace reigned*; exerted its benign Efficacy, in a Manner yet more triumphant; not only reſcuing Us from Guilt and Ruin, but reſtoring Us *to everlaſting Life* and Glory. And all this *through* the *Righteouſneſs*, the complete meritorious Righteouſneſs, brought in *by JESUS CHRIST our LORD* *.

You enquire after the *Proofs* of this imputed Righteouſneſs. From a Multitude I ſhall ſelect a few. Sufficient, I hope, to make it appear—That this is the declared Doctrine of our *Church*, and the avowed Belief of her *moſt eminent* Divines—That it is copiouſly revealed through the whole SCRIPTURES;

* Rom. v. 21.

TURES; revealed in many expreſs Paſſages, and deducible from a Variety of inſtructive Similitudes.

Hear the Language of our Common Prayer, in a very affecting and ſolemn Addreſs to the ALMIGHTY: "We do not preſume to come to "this thy Table, O merciful LORD, truſting in "our own Righteouſneſs."—If we may not, if we dare not, rely on our own Righteouſneſs, when we approach the *euchariſtic Table*; much leſs may we depend upon it, when we are ſummoned to the *deciſive Tribunal*.—Should you aſk, On what we are to depend? The Exhortation to the Communion furniſhes an Anſwer; "On the meritorious Death "and Paſſion of *CHRIST*, whereby *alone* we ob-"tain Remiſſion of Sins, and are made Partakers "of the Kingdom of Heaven."

The Collect, appointed for the Feſtival of *Circumciſion*, has this remarkable Introduction; "Almighty "GOD, whoſe bleſſed SON was *obedient to the* "*Law for Man*." In what Senſe, or with what Propriety, can this be affirmed? Unleſs *CHRIST*'s perfect Obedience be referable to Us, and accepted inſtead of ours? On any other Interpretation, I ſhould think, He was obedient, not for *Man*, but for *Himſelf*.

Should the artful Critic give ſome other Turn to theſe Paſſages, it will avail Him but little. Becauſe the Church, her own *beſt* Expoſitor, has explained the Meaning of ſuch Phraſes, and put the Matter beyond all Doubt. In her eleventh Article ſhe ſays; "We are accounted righteous before GOD only "for the Merits of our LORD and SAVIOUR "*JESUS CHRIST*."—The Doctrine relating to Pardon of Sin, had been ſtated in a preceding

Article. This diſplays the Method, whereby Sinners may appear righteous in the Sight of GOD, and in the Court of Heaven; ſo as to recover the divine Favour, and obtain a Title to eternal Bliſs. —This is done, not by any *native* Righteouſneſs, not by any *acquired* Righteouſneſs, but wholly by an *imputed* Righteouſneſs. The two former Methods are ſo far from conſtituting our reconciling and juſtifying Righteouſneſs, that they have no Share in it; they contribute nothing towards it; but are totally excluded from it. We are accounted righteous, and accepted as ſuch, ONLY (mark the Expreſſion) ONLY through the meritorious Obedience, and propitiating Blood of our great MEDIATOR.

The Homilies are, if it be poſſible, ſtill more explicit, and more cogent. In the Homily concerning the Salvation of Mankind, we read the following Words; — "The Apoſtle toucheth three Things, "which muſt go together in our Juſtification. On "GOD's Part, his great Mercy and Grace. On "*CHRIST*'s Part, the Satisfaction of GOD's "Juſtice, or the Price of our Redemption, by the "Offering of his Body, and Shedding of his Blood, "with Fulfilling of the Law perfectly. On our "Part, true and lively Faith in the Merits of *JESUS CHRIST*, which yet is not ours, but "by GOD's working in Us."—You ſee, according to the Judgment of our venerable Reformers, not only the Offering of *CHRIST*'s Body, and Shedding of *CHRIST*'s Blood, but alſo his *perfect Fulfilling* of the Law, are the adequate Price of our Redemption. All theſe act conjointly, they ſweetly harmonize, in the great and glorious Work.

To

To ſuppoſe their Diſunion, is a *doctrinal* Miſtake, ſomewhat like that *practical* Error of the Papiſts, in ſevering the ſacramental Wine from the ſacramental Bread; adminiſtering to the Laity the Symbols of the ſlaughtered Body, but with-holding the Symbols of the ſtreaming Blood.

There are *other* Clauſes in the ſame Homily, which ſet the Seal of the Church to our Sentiments. I ſhall content myſelf with tranſcribing one from the Concluſion.—" *CHRIST*, ſays that Form of ſound " Words, is the Righteouſneſs of all them, that do " truly believe. He for them paid their Ranſom by " his Death. He for them fulfilled the Law in his " Life. So that now, in HIM, and by HIM, " every true *chriſtian* Man may be called a Fulfiller " of the Law; foraſmuch as that which their In- " firmity lacked, *CHRIST*'s Righteouſneſs hath " ſupplied."—This Authority is as clear, as the Doctrine authorized is comfortable. May the former ſway our Judgment! May the latter chear our Hearts!

The Homily on *CHRIST*'s Nativity informs the Reader, that the Deſign of our LORD's Incarnation was—" To give Light unto the World, " and call Sinners to Repentance; to *fulfil the Law* " *for Us*, and become the Propitiation for our Sins; " to caſt out the Prince of this World, and deſtroy " the Works of the Devil."—We have all broke the Law; We are all unable to keep the Law; therefore, the Bleſſed *JESUS* fulfilled the Law —fulfilled it, in *each* and *every* of its Demands— fulfilled it, in the *higheſt* Degree of Perfection— and, what is of all Conſiderations moſt delightful, fulfilled it *for Us*. His Obedience took the Place

of what We were obliged to perform, under the Covenant of Works; and is not only the meritorious, but alſo the conſtituent Cauſe of our Juſtification.

So that — if there be any Worthineſs in our LORD's moſt holy Nature; any Merit in his Exerciſe of the ſubliméſt Virtues; any atoning Efficacy, in his Submiſſion to the moſt ignominious Sufferings, and tormenting Death—theſe, according to our Standard-ſyſtem of orthodox Divinity, are the *Ground* of a Sinner's Juſtification.—And, according to the Dictates of the moſt unbiaſſed Reaſon, theſe are the *beſt*, the *ſureſt* Ground, that the Heart can wiſh, or the Imagination conceive.

Does it not, from the preceding Quotations, appear; That the Doctrine of Juſtification through the imputed Righteouſneſs of our REDEEMER, is far from being diſclaimed by the *eſtabliſhed Church*? —I am ſorry, but conſtrained to own, that We rarely find any conſiderable Strictures of this great evangelical Peculiarity, in our *modern* theological Diſcourſes. Yet there have been Preachers of the higheſt Repute for Learning, for Judgment, and for Piety, who profeſſedly maintained this leading Truth of the Goſpel.

The devout Biſhop *Beveridge*, in his *Private Thoughts*, has left upon Record the following very remarkable Acknowledgment. Which, if it ſuited *his* State of eminent Holineſs, cannot be too humbling, my dear *Theron*, for your Lips and for mine. "I do not remember, neither do I believe, that I "ever prayed, in all my Life-time, with that Re- "verence, or heard with that Attention, or re-

" ceived the Sacrament with that Faith, or did any " Work with that pure Heart, and ſingle Eye, as " I ought to have done. Inſomuch, that I look up- " on all my Righteouſneſs, but as filthy Rags; and " it is in the Robes only of the Righteouſneſs of the " SON of GOD, that I dare appear before the " MAJESTY of Heaven."

The fervent and affectionate Biſhop *Hopkins* * ſpeaks in perfect Conſonance with his Brother of *St. Aſaph.*—" The Law was given Us, not that We " ſhould ſeek Juſtification by the Obſervance of it, " but finding it impoſſible to be juſtified by fulfilling " it, We ſhould thereby be driven to *CHRIST*'s " Righteouſneſs; who hath both fulfilled it in Him- " ſelf, and ſatisfied for our tranſgreſſing of it; and " therefore ſaith the Apoſtle, *The Law was a School-* " *maſter, to bring Us unto CHRIST; that We* " *might be juſtified by Faith.* To this End it was " promulged, that ſeeing the Strictneſs of its Pre- " cepts, the Rigour of its Threatenings, and withal " being convinced of our Impotence to fulfil its " Commands, We might be urged by its Terrors " to fly to *CHRIST*, and find that Righteouſ- " neſs in Him which may anſwer all the Demands " of the Law."

Biſhop *Reynolds* †, ſtyled by his Cotemporaries, and not without Reaſon, *A walking Library*, bears his Teſtimony in the following Words;—" *CHRIST* " as our Surety paid our Debt, underwent the Curſe

* See his Sermon on *John* vii. 19.

† See his Treatiſe intitled *The Life of CHRIST.*—Which, as well as all his other Works, abound with ſtriking Sentiments; have much Elegance of Diction, a copious Variety of Learning, and a lively animating Spirit of evangelical Piety.

" due to our Sins, and bare them all in his own " Body on the Tree: became ſubject to the Law " for Us, and repreſentatively in our Stead fulfilled " all the Righteouſneſs the Law required, active and " paſſive. For Sin being once committed, there " muſt be a double Act to Juſtification; the Suffer- " ing of the Curſe, and the Fulfilling of Righteouſ- " neſs anew. The one, a Satisfaction for the In- " jury We have done to GOD, as our JUDGE: " the other, the Performance of a Service which " We owe unto Him, as our MAKER."

To this illuſtrious Triumvirate, let me join Biſhop *Davenant*. Who, for his great Abilities, and unqueſtionable Integrity, was appointed one of our religious Plenipotentiaries, at the renowned Synod of *Dort*. In his very valuable Expoſition of the Epiſtle to the *Coloſſians*, He writes to this Effect: " *Ye are complete in CHRIST*. Ye are furniſhed, " in that all-ſufficient REDEEMER, with " whatever is requiſite to everlaſting Salvation. " With *Wiſdom*; ſince it is the Conſummation of " this noble Endowment, to know *CHRIST* " and Him crucified. With *Righteouſneſs*; becauſe " He has perfectly ſatisfied the Law *, and " thoroughly

* In this Reſpect principally (ſays our Author, enlarging upon the Text) are Believers *complete*; becauſe, though deſtitute of any Righteouſneſs, that may properly be called *their own*, *CHRIST* has graciouſly enriched them with *his*. *Vid.* DAVENANT. *in Epiſt. ad Coloſſ. Cap.* ii. *Com.* 10.

Let me beg leave to intimate, That this Expoſition of the Epiſtle to the *Coloſſians*—for Perſpicuity of Style, and Accuracy of Method—for Judgment in diſcerning, and Fidelity in repreſenting the Apoſtle's Meaning — for Strength of Argument in refuting Errors, and Felicity of Inven-

" thoroughly expiated our Guilt. With *Sanctifi-*
" *cation*; becauſe his SPIRIT dwelling in our
" Hearts, mortifies our corrupt Affections, and re-
" news the Soul after the Image of its CREA-
" TOR."

Let me bring up the *Rear* with a Teſtimony, which, for Clearneſs, Solidity, and a full Repreſentation of the evangelical Doctrine, might very juſtly have claimed a Place in the *Van*. It is taken from an Author, whom the general Conſent of our Nation has diſtinguiſhed with the Title of *Judicious*. The judicious *Hooker*, in a Treatiſe on Juſtification, ſays;—" It is a childiſh Cavil our Adverſaries ſo
" greatly pleaſe themſelves with, exclaiming, that
" We tread all *Chriſtian* Virtues under our Feet;
" becauſe We teach, That Faith alone juſtifieth.
" Whereas, by this Speech, We never meant to
" exclude either Hope or Charity from being always
" joined as inſeparable Mates with Faith, in the
" Man that is juſtified; or Works from being add-
" ed, as neceſſary Duties, required of every juſtified
" Man: but to ſhew, that Faith is the only Hand,
" which putteth on *CHRIST* to Juſtification;
" and *CHRIST* the only Garment, which being
" ſo put on, covereth the Shame of our defiled Na-
" tures, hideth the Imperfection of our Works,
" and preſerveth Us blameleſs in the Sight of
" GOD: before whom, otherwiſe, the Weakneſs
" of our Faith were Cauſe ſufficient to make Us
" culpable, yea, to ſhut Us out of the Kingdom of

Invention in deducing practical Doctrines, tending both to the Eſtabliſhment of Faith, and the Cultivation of Holineſs—is, perhaps, inferior to no Writing of the Kind; and richly deſerves to be *read*, to be *ſtudied*, to be *imitated*; by our young Divines.

" Heaven, where nothing that is not abſolute can " enter."

You will allow the ſagacious Biſhop *Sanderſon* * to ſum up the Evidence; or rather to make an important Remark on the Whole of the Controverſy. That great Light of the Church, both in caſuiſtical and practical Divinity, obſerves;—" The Tidings " of a REDEEMER muſt be bleſſed and wel- " come News, to thoſe that are ſenſible of their own " Poverty, and take it of Grace." Our eagle-eyed Divine penetrates into the *true* Cauſe of the prevailing Averſeneſs to this evangelical Doctrine. It is founded on the *State* of the *Heart*, more than upon any Force of Argument. People are but little, if at all, ſenſible of their ſpiritual and moral Indigence; of the Defects which depreciate, and the Defilements which ſully, whatever they have, and whatever they do. Nay, ſtrongly tinctured with Pride, they would be themſelves the *Alpha*, and ſuffer the Bleſſed *JESUS* to be no more than the *Omega*, in procuring their eternal Salvation. Therefore they can hardly be reconciled to the humbling Character of an *Eleemoſynary*; one who lives wholly upon the Alms of the Goſpel, and is dependent upon Grace for his All.

Whereas, was this grand Obſtacle once removed; were Men *convinced* of *Sin*, of exceeding Sinfulneſs in their worſt Eſtate, and of remaining Sinfulneſs in their beſt; they would ſoon be *convinced* of *Righteouſneſs* †, of the abſolute Neceſſity and ineſtimable Worth of a REDEEMER's Righteouſneſs. They would no longer diſpute againſt it, but cordially receive it; entirely rely on it; and adore the Good-

* See his Sermon upon *Iſai.* lii. 3. † John xvi. 8.

Goodneſs, the tranſcendent and unutterable Goodneſs of GOD, in providing it.

I think, in one of our Conferences, I undertook to produce my Vouchers from the antient *Fathers*. Let me now ſubjoin two or three Atteſtations of this Kind.—From *one* of which You will perceive, that thoſe early Writers had a conſiderable Degree of Clearneſs upon the Point. From the *other* You will ſee, that, far from rejecting the Doctrine, they embrace it with Delight and Rapture. And if You will admit of the *laſt*, You cannot be ſtartled at any Thing, which I ſhall advance upon the Subject.—Let me only premiſe in general, that, if thoſe Authors are not ſo copious and explicit, with regard to the Imputation of *active* Righteouſneſs; they abound with Paſſages, which evince the *Subſtitution* of *CHRIST* in our Stead. Paſſages, which diſclaim all Dependence on any Duties of our own, and fix the Hopes of a Sinner entirely upon the Merits of his SAVIOUR. When this is the Caſe, I am not very ſolicitous about any particular Forms of Expreſſion; and far from being angry, even though the Words, which I think moſt ſignificant, are not retained.

Clemens, firſt of the antient Fathers, and an intimate Acquaintance of St. *Paul*'s, wrote an Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*. It is full of manly Senſe, and ſeraphic Piety. Among other valuable Things, the truly apoſtolic Man declares; *We are not*, in any Reſpect or in any Degree, *juſtified by Ourſelves*, but wholly by *JESUS CHRIST: not by our own Wiſdom or Prudence*, which could never find out the Way; *not by the Piety of our Hearts, or Works*

of

of Righteouſneſs performed in our Lives, which could never be ſufficient for the Purpoſe; *but by Faith*, or a fiduciary Reliance on the Righteouſneſs of Another. The one invariable Method, *by which the Almighty SOVEREIGN has juſtified all* his People, *ever ſince the World began* *.

Juſtin—who was firſt a *Gentile* Philoſopher, then an eminent *Chriſtian*, and at laſt a *Martyr* for the Truth—ſpeaks more fully to the Point †: *What elſe could cover our Sins, but the Righteouſneſs of JESUS CHRIST? By what poſſible Means could We, unrighteous and unholy Creatures, be juſtified, but only by the* Interpoſition of the *SON of GOD* in our Behalf?—Having, in this Clauſe, made a Profeſſion of his Faith; the good Man, on the Contemplation of ſuch a Privilege, breaks out into a kind of holy Tranſport. O SWEET AND DELIGHTFUL EXCHANGE! *A Diſpenſation unſearchably wiſe and gracious! Benefits, quite unexpected, and rich beyond all our Hopes! That the Tranſgreſſion of Many, ſhould be*

* Ου δ' εκεινων δικαιωμεθα, ουδε δια της ημετερας Σοφιας, η Συνεσεως, η ευσεβειας, η εργων ων κατειργασαμεθα εν οσιοτητι καρδιας· αλλα δια της πιστεως, δι' ης παντας τους απ' αιωνος ο παντοκρατωρ Θεος εδικαιωσεν. 1 Epiſt. ad Corinth.—This Quotation is *explained*, as well as *tranſlated*. But that every Reader may diſtinguiſh the Text from the Paraphraſe, the firſt is printed in *Italic*, the laſt in *Roman* Characters.

† Τι αλλο τας αμαρτιας ημων ηδυνηθη καλυψαι, η εκεινη δικαιοσυνη; Εν τινι δικαιωθηναι δυνατον τους ανομους ημας και αστεους, η εν τω υιω τω Θεω; Ω ΤΗΣ ΓΛΥΚΕΙΑΣ ΚΑΤΑΛΛΑΓΗΣ, ω της ανεξιχνιαστου δημιουργιας, ω των απροσδοκητων ευεργετηματων, ινα ανομια πολλων ω δικαιον ενι κρυβη, δικαιοσυνη δε ενος πολλους ανομους δικαιωση. Epiſt. ad Diogn.—Though DU PIN queſtions the Authenticity of this Epiſtle, He allows it to have been written by an antient Hand. Dr. CAVE, as capable a Judge, thinks there is no Reaſon to doubt, but it is the genuine Work of *Juſtin*.

be hid by one righteous PERSON; and that the Righteouſneſs of ONE, ſhould juſtify many Tranſgreſſors.

The following Words are remarkably ſtrong, and the Sentiments peculiarly bold. But they come from the Pen of the fineſt Writer in Eccleſiaſtical Antiquity. They have the great Name, and venerable Character of St. *Chryſoſtom*, for their recommendatory Preface *.—*Fear not*, ſays He, *on Account of any of thy paſt Tranſgreſſions of the Law, when once Thou haſt fled by Faith to JESUS CHRIST. The moſt enormous and the moſt deſtructive Violation of the Law, is, To be with-held by the Conſciouſneſs of any Guilt whatever, from believing on CHRIST. When Thou acteſt Faith on Him, Thou haſt fulfilled, I might ſay, more than fulfilled the Law. For Thou haſt received a better Righteouſneſs, than it could ever require: Thou art poſſeſſed of a better Obedience, than any Creature could poſſibly pay.*

Two or three Witneſſes of *diſtinguiſhed Ability*, and *undoubted Veracity*, are a ſufficient Confirmation of any Cauſe. For this Reaſon, and to avoid a tireſome Prolixity, I have ſet aſide a Multitude of Voices; which, from the Writings of our own and foreign Divines, are ready to pour their united Evidence.—And leſt the Buſineſs of Quotation, though ſparingly managed, ſhould ſeem dry and tedious; I will relieve your Wearineſs, and enliven the Collection, by an Extract from the Prince of *Engliſh* Poetry.—*Michael*, the prophetic Archangel, mentioning

* Μη τοινυν φοβηθης, ως τον νομον παραβαινων, επιδαν τη πιστει προσηλθες· τοτε γαρ αυτον παραβαινεις, οτε δ' αυτον τω Χριστω μη πιστευσης· ως αν πιστευσης αυτω, κακεινον επληρωσας, και πολλω πλειον η εκελευσε· πολλω γαρ μειζονα δικαιοσυνην εδωκας. Homil. XVII. in X ad Rom.

tioning the deſtructive Conſequences of the Fall; and aſſerting the GODHEAD of that glorious PERSON, who undertook to be the Repairer of this deadly Breach; adds,

Which HE, who comes thy SAVIOUR, ſhall re-cure,
Not by deſtroying Satan, but his Works,
In Thee and in Thy Seed. Nor can this be,
But by fulfilling (that which Thou didſt want)
Obedience to the Law of GOD, *impos'd*
On Penalty of Death; and ſuffering Death,
The Penalty to thy Tranſgreſſion due;
And due to theirs, which out of thine will grow.
SO ONLY *can high Juſtice reſt appaid* *.

The ſame celeſtial Teacher, ſpeaking of the divine Law; explaining its Nature and Deſign; that it demonſtrates, by ineſtimable Evidence, the very beſt of Men to be guilty of Sin and obnoxious to Wrath; diſplays likewiſe the great Remedy provided by the Goſpel.

——————— *That when they ſee*
Law can diſcover Sin, but not remove,
(Save by thoſe ſhadowy Expiations weak,
The Blood of Bulls and Goats) they may conclude,
Some Blood more precious muſt be paid for Man;
Juſt for Unjuſt; *that*, in ſuch Righteouſneſs,
To them by Faith imputed, *they may find*
Juſtification towards GOD, and Peace
Of Conſcience †.

Here

* MILTON, Book XII. 393. † Book XII. 289.

Here then is the expreſs Determination of our *Homilies*—ſupported by the Authority of our *Articles*—eſtabliſhed by the Concurrence of our *Liturgy*—ſtill farther ratified by the unanimous Atteſtation of ſeveral celebrated *Divines*; whoſe Lives were the brighteſt Ornament to our Church, and whoſe Writings are the moſt unexceptionable Interpretation of her Meaning.—As a Capital, to crown and complete this grand Column, ſupervenes the Declaration of the antient *Fathers*; thoſe who flouriſhed, and with the higheſt Renown, in the firſt and pureſt Ages of Chriſtianity.—So that, if great Authorities carry any Weight; if illuſtrious Names challenge any Regard; this Tenet comes attended and dignified with very conſiderable *Credentials*.

Yet, I will venture to affirm, that all theſe, conſiderable as they appear, are the *leaſt* of thoſe Teſtimonials, which recommend the Doctrine to my *Theron*'s Acceptance, and which have gained it Admittance into the Heart of

His moſt affectionate

ASPASIO.

LET-

LETTER IV.

ASPASIO *to* THERON.

Dear THERON,

THE Family, in which I have the Satisfaction to reſide, though remarkable for their genteel Figure and ample Fortune, are ſtill more amiably diſtinguiſhed by their *Benevolence*, *Hoſpitality*, and *Charity*.—As they live at a Diſtance from the Market-town, the Lady has converted one Apartment of her Houſe into a little Diſpenſatory; and ſtocked it with ſome of the moſt common, the moſt needed, and moſt ſalutary Medicines. Which, in Caſes of *ordinary* Indiſpoſition, She diſtributes to her indigent Neighbours, with ſingular Compaſſion, and with no ſmall Succeſs.—This fine Morning, *Emilia* has ordered ſome ſkilful Hands into the Fields, to cull their healing Simples, and lay up a Magazine of Health for the afflicted Poor. *Camillus* is withdrawn, to receive his Rents, and ſettle Accounts with his Tenants.

Suppoſe, We act in Concert with theſe valuable Perſons. Suppoſe, We range the delightful Fields of Scripture, and form a Collection, not of ſalutiferous Herbs, but of ineſtimable Texts; ſuch as may be of ſovereign Efficacy, to *aſſuage* the Anguiſh of a guilty Conſcience, and impart *ſaving Health* to the diſtempered Soul.—Suppoſe, We open the Mines of

divine

divine Inſpiration, and enrich Ourſelves, not with the Gold of *Ophir*, but with the *unſearchable Treaſures* of *CHRIST*; or with that perfect Righteouſneſs of our REDEEMER, which is incomparably more precious, than the Revenues of a County, or the Produce of *Peru*.

In pleading for imputed Righteouſneſs, We have already urged the Authority of our eſtabliſhed Church, and the Suffrage of her moſt eminent Divines.—The Opinion of excellent Writers, which has been the Reſult of much Learning, great Attention, and earneſt Prayer, is no contemptible Evidence. Yet We muſt always reſerve the *caſting* Voice, for thoſe infallible Umpires, the Prophets and Apoſtles. *If we receive*, with a deferential Regard, *the Witneſs of Men*; *the Witneſs of GOD is greater* *, and challenges the moſt implicit Submiſſion.—Which Remark naturally leads me to the intended Subject of this Epiſtle; or rather calls upon me to fulfil my late Engagement, and ſhew—That the above-mentioned Doctrine is copiouſly revealed, through the whole Proceſs of the Scriptures.

Let me ſelect a very ſignificant Portion from the Epiſtle to the *Romans*; which, though little inferior to a deciſive Proof, is preſented only as an Introduction to others. *Now the Righteouſneſs of GOD without the Law is manifeſted, being witneſſed by the Law and the Prophets; even the Righteouſneſs of GOD, which is by Faith of JESUS CHRIST unto all, and upon all them that believe* †. *The Righteouſneſs of GOD*, ſignifies that Righteouſneſs, which the incarnate GOD wrought out in his own all-glorious Perſon.

* 1 John v. 9. † Rom. iii. 21, 22.

Perſon *. It is ſtyled the Righteouſneſs of GOD, by way of ſuperlative Pre-eminence; in Oppoſition to any Righteouſneſs of our own, and in Contradiſtinction to the Righteouſneſs of all Creatures whatever.—This Righteouſneſs is *without the Law*. Its Efficacy has no Dependence on, its Merit receives no Addition from, any Conformity of our Practice to the divine Law: being complete, abſolutely complete in itſelf, and altogether ſufficient to procure the Reconciliation and Acceptance of Sinners.—This Righteouſneſs *is manifeſted* † by the Goſpel; and made as clear, as an Object which We behold with our own Eyes. It was *witneſſed* ‡ *by the Law and the Prophets*; and made as certain, as a Fact which is atteſted by unqueſtionable Evidence.—To produce this Evidence; to examine its Pertinency, and weigh its Sufficiency, is our preſent pleaſing Buſineſs.

We

* This Explication, or ſomething to the ſame Purpoſe, has occurred already. But it is hoped, the candid Reader will not condemn the Repetition, as a *diſagreeable* or *jejune* Tautology.—Becauſe, it is ſo conſonant to the Practice of our great Apoſtle, who repeats the Term, reinculcates the Doctrine, and hardly knows how to deſiſt from the favourite Topic: like One, who was quite enamoured with the Subject; who found Muſic in the Words; and whoſe Happineſs was bound up in the Bleſſing.—Becauſe, it is conformable to another, and a greater Example. The LORD JEHOVAH Himſelf, within the Compaſs of *one* Chapter, once and again, yea, a third and a fourth Time, ſtyles this wonderful Obedience, MY RIGHTEOUSNESS. As though the GOD of infinite Perfection *gloried* in it; thought Himſelf moſt *eminently* magnified by it; and was jealous to have all the Honour reſulting from it. See *Iſai.* li.

† Πεφανερωται. ‡ Μαρτυρουμενη.

We may begin with that gracious Declaration, made to the firſt Tranſgreſſors: *The Seed of the Woman ſhall bruiſe the Serpent's Head* *; ſhall deſtroy the Works of the Devil, and retrieve whatever was loſt by his malicious Artifices †. How could this be effected, but by reſtoring that Righteouſneſs, which, for a while, our firſt Parents poſſeſſed; which they ought always to have held faſt; but from which they ſo ſoon and ſo unhappily ſwerved?—Take the Poſition in the right Senſe, and *Chriſtianity is*, if not entirely, yet very nearly *as old as the Creation*. It was comprehended in this bleſſed Promiſe, as the *Stamina* of the largeſt Plants are contained in the Subſtance of their reſpective Seeds. Every ſubſequent Revelation being no more, than a *gradual Evolution* of this grand evangelical Principle; acting like the vegetative Powers of Nature, which, in rearing an Oak with all its Spread of Branches, only expand the Tunicles, and fill up the Veſſels of the Acorn.

The Doctrine ſeems to have been typically taught, by the remarkable Manner of *clothing* our firſt Parents.—All they could do for their own Recovery, was like the patched and beggarly Mantle of *Fig-leaves*. This they relinquiſh, and GOD Himſelf furniſhes them with Apparel ‡. Animals are ſlain, not for Food but *Sacrifice*; and the naked Criminals are arrayed with the Skins of thoſe ſlaughtered Beaſts. The Victims figured the *Expiation* of *CHRIST*'s Death;

* Gen. iii. 15.

† In ſome ſuch Senſe, I think, our firſt Parents muſt underſtand the Promiſe. Otherwiſe it could yield them no *effectual* Relief, under the diſtreſſing Senſe of their own Miſery, and the diſmal Apprehenſion of their Poſterity's Ruin.

‡ Gen. iii. 21.

the Clothing typefied the *Imputation* of his Righteouſneſs.—In perfect Conformity, perhaps with a Reference, to the Paſſage thus interpreted, the Apoſtle juſt now expreſſed Himſelf; *even the Righteouſneſs of GOD, which is* not only made over * *to all* Believers, as a rich Portion; but put * *upon all*, as a beautiful Garment. Whereby alone their moral Deformity can be covered, and their everlaſting Confuſion prevented.—*Milton*, it is certain, ſpeaking of this memorable Tranſaction, conſiders it in the ſame ſpiritual Senſe:

Nor HE their outward only with the Skins
Of Beaſts, but inward Nakedneſs † *(much more*
Opprobrious!) with his Robe of Righteouſneſs
Arraying, *cover'd from his FATHER's Sight.*

In thy Seed, ſays the great JEHOVAH to his Servant *Abraham*, *ſhall all the Nations of the Earth be bleſſed* ‡. That the Seed here mentioned is *CHRIST*, the Apoſtle ‖ places beyond all Doubt. Both

* * *Rom.* iii. 22. ΕΙΣ παντας, ΕΠΙ παντας τους πιστευοντας.

† An Alluſion to *Gen.* iii. 10. Where *Adam* confeſſes before JEHOVAH; *I heard thy Voice in the Garden, and I was afraid, becauſe I was* naked. Which muſt denote, what *Milton* truly ſtiles, an *inward* Nakedneſs, or the Loſs of Righteouſneſs. Since nothing external, no Want of bodily Ornament, could have expoſed our firſt Parent to the Wrath of GOD, or need have made Him afraid of it.

‡ Gen. xxii. 18.

‖ See St. *Paul*'s Comment upon this invaluable Promiſe, *Gal.* iii. 8, &c. *This* Commentator, We all allow, was guided by the SPIRIT, and knew the Mind of GOD. According to his Expoſition of the Text, it is pregnant with the Doctrine of Juſtification by Faith, and contains an Abridgment of the Goſpel.

Both Scripture and Reaſon declare, That *true Bleſſedneſs* muſt neceſſarily include—the Pardon of Sins, and the Favour of GOD—the Sanctification of our Souls, and the Inheritance of Life eternal. None of which are to be acquired by any human Performances; but all are to be ſought, and all may be found, in the Root and Offspring of *Abraham*, *JESUS CHRIST*. Who is therefore moſt pertinently ſtyled, THE DESIRE OF ALL NATIONS *: The *actual* Deſire of every enlightened Nation; and the *implicit* Deſire of all Nations whatever. Becauſe all, without any Exception, covet, what is to be derived only from *JESUS CHRIST* the Righteous, *real* Happineſs.

The patriarchal Age, and the legal Oeconomy, bore their Teſtimony to this Truth, by typical Perſons, emblematical Miracles, and figurative Uſages. Indeed, the whole ceremonial Service was a grand *Series* of Types, repreſenting *CHRIST* and his everlaſting Righteouſneſs †. In all which, this was the *unanimous* though ſilent Language; *Behold the LAMB of GOD, that taketh away the Sin of the World.*—Theſe I ſhall not ſtay to diſcuſs; becauſe Proofs, more explicit and poſitive, wait for our Conſideration. Only I would juſt make a tranſient Obſervation, relating to one very remarkable Conſtitution of the *Jewiſh* Ritual.

The High-prieſt had, on the Front of his Mitre, a Plate of pure Gold, engraven with that venerable Motto ‡, HOLINESS TO THE LORD. Which

* Hag. ii. 7.

† *Totum Moſis Miniſterium eò comparatum eſt, ut ad Meſſiam, illiuſque Juſtitiam, Fide apprehendendam, veluti manu ducat.* WITS. *Miſcell.*

‡ Exod. xxviii. 36, 37.

was always to be on his Forehead, when He performed the ſolemn Miniſtrations of the Sanctuary; and for this important Reaſon, that the People *might be accepted before the LORD* *. Did not this moſt clearly foreſhew the immaculate Holineſs of our great HIGH-PRIEST? And with equal Clearneſs imply, that *his* Holineſs ſhould procure Acceptance for all his Followers?

In the Book of *Job*, We have ſeveral Hints of this Truth, and one Paſſage very expreſs to our Purpoſe. —*Elihu* deſcribes an unconverted Perſon, under the chaſtiſing Hand of Providence. *Whoſe Life*, through the Extremity of his Diſeaſe, *draws near to the Grave*; *and his Soul*, through the Multitude of his Iniquities, is ready to become a Prey *to the Deſtroyers*. In this deplorable Condition, *if there be* preſent *with Him*, *the MESSENGER* † of the Covenant of Peace; *that great INTERPRETER* † of the divine Counſels, who, for his ſuper-excellent Wiſdom, is juſtly acknowledged to be *One among a thouſand*, or rather the chiefeſt among ten thouſand. If He, by his enlightening SPIRIT, vouchſafe *to ſhew unto* the afflicted *Man his* own perfect Righteouſneſs; that

* Exod. xxviii. 38.

† † See *Job* xxxiii. 22, *&c.*—*CHRIST* is called מלאך *The Angel of* the divine *Preſence*, Iſai. lxiii. 9. *The Meſſenger of the Covenant*, Mal. iii. 1.—He is alſo, in the moſt unlimited Senſe of the Phraſe, מליץ *The Interpreter* of the divine Counſels: He, to whom the FATHER hath given the Tongue of the Learned, and by whom He makes known the otherwiſe unſearchable Myſteries of the Goſpel.—Should any Doubt remain, concerning the Propriety of applying this Paſſage to our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*, the Reader, I hope, will give himſelf the Pleaſure of peruſing the polite WITSIUS, *Oecon.* Lib. IV. Cap. iii. § xxxi. and Dr. GREY's valuable Notes upon the Place, in his *Liber Jobi*.

that moſt meritorious *Uprightneſs*, on which alone a Sinner may depend, both for temporal and eternal Salvation. *Then* the poor diſtreſſed Creature, attentive to this Inſtruction, and applying to this Righteouſneſs, is made Partaker of Pardon. *GOD*, the ſovereign LORD of Life and Death, *is gracious unto Him*; *and ſaith*, in the Greatneſs of his Strength, as well as in the Multitude of his Mercies, *Deliver Him from going down into the Pit* of Corruption, as a Pledge of his Deliverance from the Pit of Perdition. For, *I have found a Ranſom*, ſufficient to ſatisfy my Juſtice. I have received an Atonement, in behalf of this once obnoxious, now reconciled Tranſgreſſor.

But why do I inſiſt upon *one* particular Paragraph? It ſeems to be the main Deſign of the *whole* Book, to overthrow all Pretenſions of any juſtifying Righteouſneſs in Man. That the wretched Sinner, nay, that the greateſt Saint, ſtript of every perſonal Plea, may ſee nothing to rely on, but the Merits of a REDEEMER. This is the final Iſſue of all thoſe warm Debates, which paſs between the afflicted Hero and his cenſorious Friends. This is the grand Reſult of *Elihu*'s calm Reaſoning, and of GOD Almighty's awful Interrogatories. The apparent *Center* this *, in which all the Lines terminate; juſtly therefore to be conſidered, as the *principal* Scope of the whole Work.

I muſt not omit an excellent Obſervation, which I find in ſome *critical and explanatory Notes* †, on the laſt Words of *David*. The judicious Author proving, that this Song relates to *CHRIST*; that it

* See *Job* xlii. 6. † By Dr. GREY. See 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 3, *&c.*

diſplays the Dignity of our REDEEMER, under the Character of *The KING*, and *The JUST ONE*; adds, as an Explication of the laſt amiable and glorious Title—"Our *LORD JESUS* "*CHRIST* is ſo called, not ſo much for having "fulfilled all Righteouſneſs, in his own Perſon, and "performed an unſinning Obedience to the Will "of GOD, as becauſe by his Righteouſneſs im-"puted to Us, We alſo upon the Terms * of the "Goſpel, are juſtified, or accounted righteous "before GOD."

I think We may evidently diſcern the ſame Vein of evangelical Doctrine, running through many of the *Pſalms*—*He ſhall convert* † *my Soul*; turn me, not only

* *Upon the Terms of the Goſpel*—That is, *freely*; or, as the Prophet ſpeaks, *without Money and without Price*. For nothing is requiſite, in order to a Participation of *CHRIST* and his Benefits, but a Grant from GOD. This Grant the Goſpel exhibits, proclaims, and tenders to all. All, without making any Diſtinction, or requiring any Qualification. That Salvation may *be, not of Works, but of Grace*.—This Point, which is ſo intimately connected with our Comfort and Hope, the Reader may ſee more fully ſtated in *Dialogue* XV.

† *Pſal.* xxiii. 3. I am ſenſible the Word שובב may ſignify to *refreſh* or *reſtore*; may anſwer to the *Greek* Phraſe αναψυξις; and denote the Comforts of the HOLY GHOST.—This Verb may alſo bear the ſame Signification with the Participle επιστρεψας, as it is uſed by our LORD, in his Exhortation to *Peter*, *When Thou art converted*. Not deſcribing the firſt grand Revolution in the Heart; by which a new Determination is given to the Judgment, and a new Bias to the Affections. But expreſſing thoſe ſubſequent Operations of the Divine SPIRIT; by which We are recovered from our various Relapſes, and healed of our daily Infirmities. And I queſtion, whether there is any Inſtance of Backſliding, in which We more frequently need thoſe reſtoring Aids,

only from Sin and Ignorance, but from every falſe Confidence, and every deceitful Refuge. *He ſhall bring me forth in Paths of Righteouſneſs*, in thoſe Paths of imputed Righteouſneſs, which are always adorned with the Trees of Holineſs; are always watered with the Fountains of Conſolation; and always terminate in everlaſting Reſt.—Some, perhaps, may aſk, Why I give this Senſe of the Paſſage? Why may it not ſignify the Paths of Duty, and the Way of *our own* Obedience?—Becauſe, ſuch Effects are here mentioned, as never have reſulted, and never can reſult, from any Duties of our own. Theſe, detached from our SAVIOUR's Righteouſneſs, are not *green Paſtures*, but a parched and blaſted Heath: are not *ſtill Waters*, but a troubled and diſorderly * Stream.

than in the Caſe of adhering to our REDEEMER's Righteouſneſs. So prone are We to *forget our Reſting-place!* So liable to fall from our Stedfaſtneſs in *CHRIST!*

* *Blaſted, diſorderly*—Let not theſe Words grate on the Ear; or, if they grate on the Ear, let them humble the Heart. What were *Job*'s Duties? Zealous and exemplary; practiſed from his very Youth; and neither excelled, nor equalled by any Perſon then on the Earth. Yet theſe, in Point of Juſtification, were not a whit better than *Aſpaſio* repreſents. Let Us hear the laſt Words of this matchleſs Saint, *I abhor myſelf, and repent in Duſt and Aſhes.* From this Confeſſion we learn, that, with all his Furniture of *perſonal* Obedience, He had juſt enough to be aſhamed, confounded, undone.

After all; if the Reader, diſſatisfied with *Aſpaſio*'s Interpretation, ſhould prefer the following Expoſition, it is very much at his Service.—*The LORD*, reconciled to a poor Sinner, by Means of free Juſtification, *is* become *my Shepherd.—Therefore, I ſhall not want*, whatever is truly good, either for my Body or my Soul, in Time or to Eternity.—*He maketh me*, not to paſs through, but *to lie down*; to continue, abide, and reſt *in green Paſtures*;

Stream. Neither can theſe ſpeak Peace, or adminiſter Comfort, when We paſs through the Valley and Shadow of Death. To yield theſe Bleſſings is the exalted Office of *CHRIST*, and the ſole Prerogative of *his* Obedience.

Admitting, that this Obedience is of ſovereign Advantage, during the Years of Life, and in the Hour of Death; it may ſtill occur to the ſerious and inquiſitive Mind, what will be our Safeguard, in the inviſible State? When the Soul departs, and our Place on Earth knows Us no more: when the Body revives, and We ſhall all ſtand before the Judgment-ſeat: what will *then* avail Us?—The ſame Righteouſneſs of our Divine LORD. This, if I miſtake not, is diſplayed in the very next Pſalm. Which begins with a ſolicitous Enquiry; ſubjoins a ſatisfactory Anſwer; and cloſes with a moſt pertinent but rapturous Apoſtrophe.—This is the Enquiry; *Who ſhall aſcend into the Hill of the LORD? Or, who ſhall riſe up in his holy Place?* —To which this is the Anſwer; *Even He that hath clean*

amidſt the Promiſes, Privileges, and Bleſſings of the Goſpel; than which nothing can be more nouriſhing, and nothing more delightful, to the ſpiritual Man.—*He leadeth me* forth, to Activity and Duty, *by the ſtill Waters.* With a Senſe of my Intereſt in *CHRIST* and his inexhauſtible Fulneſs, He refreſheth my Spirit, and animates me to Obedience.—When, through the Infirmity of my Fleſh, I fall and contract Guilt, *He reſtoreth my Soul.* He teacheth me to behold the bleeding Lamb of GOD, and to ſee all my Sins laid upon my SAVIOUR. This renews my Strength, and re-inſpirits my drooping Reſolutions.—Thus *He leadeth me* on; enables me to perſevere and advance, *in the Paths of Righteouſneſs* and true Holineſs. Not for my Merit, but *for his* own *Name's ſake*; not to recompenſe any Excellency in me, but to manifeſt the exceeding Riches of his own Grace.

clean Hands and a pure Heart *. *He ſhall receive the Bleſſing* † of Remiſſion and Reconciliation; *and Righteouſneſs*, as the Cauſe of both, *from the GOD of his Salvation*. Even that perfect Righteouſneſs, which is not acquired by Man, but beſtowed by JEHOVAH: which is not performed by the Saint, but *received* ‡ by the Sinner: which is the only ſolid Baſis, to ſupport our Hopes of Happineſs; and the only valid Plea, for an Admiſſion into the Manſions of Joy.—Then follows the Apoſtrophe. The Prophet foreſees the Aſcenſion of *CHRIST* and of his Saints. He ſees his LORD, marching at the Head of the redeemed World, and conducting them unto the City of the living GOD. Suitably to ſuch a View, and in a moſt beautiful Strain of Poetry, He addreſſes Himſelf to the heavenly Portals; *Lift up your Heads, O ye Gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlaſting Doors; and the King of Glory*, with all the Heirs of his Grace and Righteouſneſs, *ſhall*

* *Pſal.* xxiv. 4. *Who* hath a pure Heart? He only, whoſe *Heart is ſprinkled from an evil Conſcience*, by the precious Blood of *CHRIST*. Who hath clean Hands? He only, who *lives*, and orders his whole Converſation, *by Faith in the SON of GOD*. Heb. x. 22. Gal. ii. 20.

† What the Pſalmiſt means, when He ſays, *The Bleſſing*, is explained by Himſelf, *Pſal.* xxxii. 1. *Bleſſed is He, whoſe Tranſgreſſion is forgiven, whoſe Sin is covered.* And it is well obſerved by a certain Writer; "Righte-"ouſneſs being found only in *JESUS CHRIST*, the "Subſtitute for the Guilty, to Him alone the Bleſſing "has reſpect. The Bleſſing reſts only on his Righte-"ouſneſs, and follows it wherever it goes. To whom-"ſoever it extends, the Bleſſing is alſo conveyed."

‡ The Words of the Apoſtle, ο λαμβανων την δωρεαν της δικαιοσυνης, are almoſt a literal Tranſlation, are the very beſt Explanation, of the Pſalmiſt's Language, ישא צדקה *Rom.* v. 17. *Pſal.* xxiv. 5.

shall make their triumphant Entry; *shall enter in*, and go out no more.

Having shewn the powerful and extensive Influence of our REDEEMER's Righteousness; its Efficacy, in this World to justify, in the other World to glorify; well may the sweet Singer of *Israel* profess his supreme Value for it, and entire Dependence on it. *I will go forth in the Strength of the LORD GOD, and will make mention of thy Righteousness only* *. As though He had said; I will have recourse to no other Righteousness, for the Consolation of my Soul. I will plead no other Righteousness, for the Recommendation of my Person. I will fly to no other Righteousness, for my final Acceptance, and endless Felicity.—This is that *Raiment of Needle-work and Clothing of wrought Gold* †, in which the Church, the Queen-Consort, is presented to her immortal Bridegroom; with which She enters the everlasting Habitations, to be "for ever with the "LORD."—This is that Garment *for Glory and for Beauty* ‡, which clothed our great HIGH-PRIEST; and, descending to his very Feet ‖, clothes and adorns the lowest Members of his mystical Body.

Recollecting all the foregoing Particulars, justly and on the most rational Ground, does our royal Author

* *Psal.* lxxi. 16. There is, in the *Hebrew* Original, and in the new Translation, a very emphatical Repetition; which adds Weight to the Sentiment, and demands a peculiar Attention from the Reader: *Thy Righteousness, even thine only.*

† Psal. xlv. 13.

‡ *Exod.* xxviii. 31. *Notabat*, says WITSIUS upon the Place, *illud Pallium Justitiæ, quo indutus est, & suos induit CHRISTUS.*

‖ Rev. i. 13.

Author declare; *Bleſſed are the People, that know the joyful Sound: they ſhall walk, O LORD, in the Light of thy Countenance. In thy Name ſhall they rejoice all the Day: and in thy Righteouſneſs ſhall they be exalted* *.—They are truly bleſſed, they alone are happy, who *know the joyful Sound* of the Goſpel; not only receive it with their Ears, but admit it into their very Hearts; ſo as to partake of the ſacred Peace, and ſpiritual Liberty, which it proclaims.—*They ſhall walk in the Light of thy Countenance*; they ſhall enjoy ſuch Communications of thy Grace, and ſuch Manifeſtations of thy Love, as will conſtitute the Serenity and Sunſhine of their Souls.—*In thy Name, O LORD JESUS CHRIST*, in thy matchleſs Perſon, and thy infinite Merits, *ſhall they rejoice* †. And not occaſionally, but habitually;

* Pſal. lxxxix. 15, 16.

† Some Readers, perhaps, may think this Interpretation of the Word *Righteouſneſs*, not ſtrictly proper; and the Proof which *Aſpaſio* draws from ſuch Paſſages of Scripture, not ſufficiently concluſive.—For their Satisfaction and my own, I would aſk; What other Interpretation, conſiſtent with the Tenour of the Goſpel, can be put upon the Word? Can it mean GOD's *Juſtice*, which giveth to All according to their Deſerts? In this View, *David* could have little Cauſe to rejoice in it, but abundant Reaſon to be terrified at it.—Does it ſignify GOD's *Faithfulneſs* in performing his Promiſes? What are all his Promiſes, but Expreſſions of Good-will in *CHRIST*; founded on the Merits and Righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*; or, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *yea and amen*, both made and confirmed, *in CHRIST JESUS*? —Does it denote the *Mercy* and *Benignity* of GOD, juſtifying, regenerating, ſaving Sinners? This Senſe, and indeed every comfortable Senſe, either immediately refers to, or ultimately terminates in, *CHRIST* and his Grace; *CHRIST* and his Righteouſneſs. For, in every Thing

bitually; not barely at ſome diſtinguiſhed Intervals, but *all the Day*. Their Joy ſhall be as laſting, as it is ſubſtantial.—Though abaſed, though confounded in themſelves, *in thy Righteouſneſs ſhall they be exalted*; now exalted to a State of holy Friendſhip and delightful Communion with GOD; and exalted, when Time ſhall be no more, to a State of celeſtial Glory, and eternal Bliſs.

How thoroughly *evangelical* is this ſeraphic Writer! He has Joy, He has Bleſſedneſs, and He looks for everlaſting Exaltation. Yet not from his Faith, his Repentance, and his own ſincere Obedience. According to this, which is the modern Scheme, Faith, inſtead of receiving, would *ſupplant* the *LORD JESUS:* Repentance, inſtead of being the Gift of *CHRIST*, would become his *Rival*: and ſincere Obedience, which is for the Praiſe and Glory of GOD, would *eclipſe* and *impoveriſh* his Grace.—But *David* adopts no ſuch Sentiments. *David* maintains no ſuch Doctrine. This is the invariable Language of his Heart; this the Burden of his Song; *All my Springs* of Hope, of Truſt, and Conſolation, O thou adored IMMANUEL, *are in Thee* *.

This Senſe is the leſs precarious, I had almoſt ſaid the more certain, as it exactly correſponds with the Analogy of Faith, and coincides with the expreſs Declarations of other Scriptures.—*Iſaiah* is ſtyled the *Evangeliſt* of the *Jewiſh* Church. Becauſe, more frequently than any of the Prophets he

Thing conſolatory, *CHRIST* is ALL. And if this be true, *Aſpaſio*'s Doctrine cannot be falſe, nor his Expoſition wrong.

* Pſal. lxxxvii. 7.

he celebrates, and more copiouſly explains, this and other Peculiarities of the Goſpel.—In the very firſt Chapter, He preaches theſe glad Tidings; *Sion ſhall be redeemed with Judgment, and her Converts with Righteouſneſs.* *Sion*, the Goſpel-Church, compoſed of fallen Creatures, ſometime diſobedient to their GOD, and enſlaved to Satan, ſhall be *redeemed*. Redeemed, not with corruptible Things, Silver and Gold, but by ſevere *Judgments* executed on their glorious HEAD, and gracious REPRESENTATIVE. And not by theſe only, but by *Righteouſneſs* alſo; by the perfect and moſt meritorious Obedience of the ſame divinely excellent PERSON *.

Our ſacred Author bears his Teſtimony with warmer Zeal and brighter Evidence, as he proceeds in his incomparable Diſcourſes. *Surely, ſhall one ſay* (or, as it may be rendered, *only*) *in the LORD have I Righteouſneſs and Strength* †. Pleaſe to obſerve, *Theron*,

* *Hanc Redemptionem docet* SPIRITUS SANCTUS *habere Nos in Obedientiâ & Sanguine JESU CHRISTI.* Iſai. i. 27, VITRING. in Loc.

† *Iſai.* xlv. 24. *In the LORD have I Righteouſneſs and Strength.* I think, We have clouded the Beauty, and weakened the Energy of this Clauſe, by detaching it from the preceding Sentence. This Clauſe ſhould make a Part of IMMANUEL's auguſt Speech. It preſcribes the Form of that *religious Swearing*, or of that *ſolemn Confeſſion*, which is required from every human Creature, who deſires to inherit Salvation. Let Us read it in this Connection, and We ſhall have the moſt important Doctrine, that ever was delivered; expreſſed in the moſt forcible Manner, that can be conceived.

I have ſworn by Myſelf, and all my immortal Perfections. *The Word is gone out of my Mouth in* Truth, in Wiſdom, and conſummate *Equity*; and ſhall *not return*,

Theron. It is not ſaid, in my own Works, in my own Repentance, no, nor in my own Faith, but *in the LORD*, in the incarnate JEHOVAH, have I Righteouſneſs.—Righteouſneſs for Juſtification, and Strength for Sanctification. An imputed Righteouſneſs, to procure my Acceptance; an imparted Strength, to produce my Holineſs. The firſt, conſtituting my Title to the everlaſting Inheritance; the laſt, forming my perſonal Preparation for its Enjoyment.—*Surely*, which expreſſes a firm Perſuaſion, and an unſhaken Affiance. *Only*, which denotes an utter Renunciation of all other Confidence, and excludes every other Ground of Hope.—*Righteouſneſſes* *, the Original is in the plural Number. Which ſeems to be uſed, not without an important Deſign; to enlarge the Significancy of the Word, and make it correſpond with the Richneſs of the Bleſſing. So that it may imply the Fulneſs and ſupereminent Excellency of this

either to be repealed, or to be altered.—Who can hear ſuch an Exordium, from ſuch a Speaker, and not be awed into the deepeſt Reverence? LORD, We are all Attention. What Thou pronounceſt, with ſuch unparalleled Solemnity, We would receive into our very Hearts. It ſhall be the ruling Principle of our Faith and Life.—Is ſuch our Reſolution? This then is the Decree, this the Oath of JEHOVAH; *To ME every Knee ſhall bow: to ME every Tongue ſhall ſwear*, (אמר) ſaying, SURELY IN THE LORD HAVE I RIGHTEOUSNESS AND STRENGTH.—Talke We of Confeſſion of Faith? Here We have a Confeſſion of Faith, drawn up by Omniſcience, and enjoined by Omnipotence.

* צדקות parallel to which, both in Conſtruction and Signification, is the Phraſe uſed by St. *John*, Δικαιωμαῖα, Rev. xix. 8. *The fine Linen is the Righteouſneſs* (properly the Righteouſneſſes) *of the Saints.*

this Gift of Grace; as comprehending whatever *, either of Suffering or of Obedience, is requisite to the Justification of Sinners.

Therefore the Prophet adds; *In the LORD, shall all the Seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory* †. Most important and most precious Text! Every Expression is big with Truth, and bright with Grace.—*All the Seed:* intimating, that the Way of Salvation, in every Age of the World, and to all the People of GOD, is invariable and one.—What is this invariable Way? It is to be pardoned, and delivered from Wrath; to be approved, and admitted into Favour; or, as the inspired Penman expresses it, to be *justified*.—How is this effected? Not by our upright Aims, not by our sincere Endeavours, but by *having* a real and proper *Righteousness*.—Where is this to be had? Not in Ourselves; not in any Accomplishments, or any Performances of our own; but *in the LORD* REDEEMER, and his consummately righteous Nature, Affections, Actions.—Are these sufficient for the Purpose? So sufficient, that We may not only confide, but *glory* in them. They afford Cause, not only for the Stedfastness of Reliance, but for the Elevations of Triumph. Cleaving to these, We may look Sin and Satan, look Death and Hell in the Face; and say, with a noble Defiance, *Who shall condemn Us?*

What

* *Vult dicere Propheta, in JEHOVAH esse* ID PROPTER QUOD *Peccator respipiscens & credens*, a Peccatis absolvi, & jure ad Benedictionem cœlestem *donari queat ac debeat: esse illud JEHOVÆ proprium; ab ipso quærendum; quod extra ipsum non invenitur.* VITRING.

† Isai. xlv. 25.

What he had juſt now aſſerted, he exemplifies in his own, and in the Perſon of every true Believer. *I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my Soul ſhall be joyful in my GOD; for He hath clothed me with the Garments of Salvation, He hath covered me with the Robe of Righteouſneſs* *. True Believers are compared, in one of our ſacred Eclogues, to *a Company of Horſes in Pharoah's Chariot* †: to *Horſes*, than which no Animal is more ſtately and graceful: to *Egyptian* Horſes, which were the beſt and completeſt, then in the World: to thoſe in *Pharoah*'s Chariot, which, doubtleſs, were a choice Set; ſelected from Thouſands; and fineſt, where all were fine. Here, methinks, I ſee the Compariſon realized. *Chriſtians*, endued with ſuch a Spirit, as breathes in this animated Text, are like a Collection of gallant and majeſtic Steeds; not deſtined to low Drudgery, but appointed to run in the royal Chariot; all Life; full of Fire; champing the Bit, and eager for the Chaſe. Nothing can more beautifully deſcribe a State of Exultation and Ardour, than the preceding Similitude, or the following Words—*I will rejoice*; *I will greatly rejoice*; *my* very *Soul*, and all that is within me, *ſhall be joyful in my GOD*. Wherefore? Becauſe He *has clothed me*, undone Sinner as I am, *with the Garments of Salvation:* becauſe *He hath covered me*, defective as all my Services are, *with the Robe of Righteouſneſs* ‡. A Robe, which hides every Corruption, and covers every Sin: ſo that neither Stain

* Iſai. lxi. 10. † Cant. i. 9.

‡ *Id quod Peccatorem nudum tegit coram DEO, eſt ſanctiſſima & pretioſa* Juſtitia *ſive* Obedientia *CHRISTI JESU. Hoc Veſte DEUS Populum ſuum Induit, tam quod eam Credentibus ex Gratiâ* imputat; *tum quod eos Fide donat, per quam eandem ad ſe applicant.* VITRING.

Stain nor Deformity appear in my Character. A Robe, which adorns and dignifies my Soul; renders it fair as the Moon, clear as the Sun *, and meet for the Inheritance of Saints in Light.

Having repreſented this Righteouſneſs, in a Variety of grand and charming Views—the Prophet farther characterizes it, as the *unalterable* and *never-failing* Origin of our Juſtification and Happineſs. This he diſplays by a Train of Images, bold and ſublime to the laſt Degree. *Lift up your Eyes to the Heavens, and look upon the Earth beneath: for the Heavens ſhall vaniſh away like Smoke, and the Earth ſhall wax old like a Garment; but my Salvation ſhall be for ever, and my Righteouſneſs ſhall not be aboliſhed* †. —Obſerve the vaſt Dimenſions, and the firm Foundations, both of the upper and the lower World. How ſtrong, how ſtedfaſt, they all appear! Yet theſe, indiſſoluble as they may ſeem, ſhall periſh. —This majeſtic *Globe*, on which Summers ſhine and flowery Proſpects ſmile, ſhall loſe its beautiful Gloſs; and ſoon be laid aſide, like a decayed uſeleſs Garment. Even that more majeſtic *Concave*, in which Stars glitter, and Comets glow, ſhall be deprived of its very ſuperior Splendour; and vaniſh away, like the unſubſtantial diſſolving Smoke.—Whereas, *my Salvation*, together with the ineſtimable Bleſſings comprehended in it, ſhall ſubſiſt, ſhall flouriſh *for ever*. *And my Righteouſneſs*, which is the meritorious Cauſe of all, *ſhall not be aboliſhed*; but remain an immoveable Baſis and an inviolable Sanctuary, for the Repoſe and Safety of Sinners. —In ſhort; whether there be moral Virtues, they ſhall be found wanting; whether there be chriſtian

* Cant. vi. 10. † Iſai. li. 6.

Graces, they ſhall prove ineffectual; but my Conformity to the Law, and my Obedience unto Death, neither need Addition, nor admit of Alteration. They are *all-ſufficient* in their Merit, and in their Agency *everlaſting*.

When *Day* ariſes on our benighted Hemiſphere, it breaks and ſpreads by a gradual Increaſe. Forming, firſt, the grey Twilight; next, the bluſhing Morn; then, the ſhining Light; till all is heightened into the Blaze and Glow of Noon.—When *Spring* reviſits our wintry Clime, She alſo advances by gentle Degrees. Firſt, ſwells the Bud, and protrudes the Gem. Then, expands the Leaf, and unfolds the Bloſſom. The Face of Things is continually changing for the better; till, at Length, all the Country is covered with Bloom and Verdure.—This leiſurely Proceſs, renders the *ſtrong* Effulgence of the celeſtial Orb, more ſupportable; and the *lovely* Expanſions of the vegetable Creation, more obſervable.

So progreſſive and increaſing are the Diſplays of *JESUS CHRIST*, exhibited in the Scriptures. Whoſe Appearance is unſpeakably *more delightful* to the Soul, than the Emanations of orient Light are to the Eye, or the Entertainments of the vernal Seaſon to our other Senſes.—The Gloom of fallen *Adam* was alleviated by a Ray from this SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.—*Abraham* and the Patriarchs ſaw afar off the Bleſſed *JESUS*, *as the Morning ſpread upon the Mountains* *.—The *Pſalmiſt* and the Prophets, beheld his nearer Approaches, like the Sun upon the Point of Riſing.—To the Apoſtles and Evangeliſts He aroſe, in perfect Luſtre;

* Joel ii. 2.

Luſtre, and complete Beauty. The Grace and the Privileges, which *dawned* under other Diſpenſations, are *brought* even to meridian *Light* by the Goſpel. —This I mention, juſt to intimate, what You may expect from a following Letter.

In the mean Time, let Us attend to the Prophet *Daniel*. He records a Meſſage from Heaven, which is more clearly deſcriptive of this great evangelical Bleſſing, than all the foregoing Texts.—He had been under much Diſtreſs, and in great Perplexity: afflicted for his own, and his Countrymens Sins; anxious for the Welfare of the choſen Nation, and the Proſperity of true Religion. When an Angel was diſpatched to the holy Mourner, with this moſt chearing News; which, received by Faith, is the richeſt Balm to a wounded Conſcience, and the only Remedy for a guilty World. *Seventy Weeks are determined upon thy People, and upon thy holy City; to finiſh the Tranſgreſſion, and make an End of Sin; to make Reconciliation for Iniquity; and to bring in everlaſting Righteouſneſs* *.—This Prophecy, without all Contradiction, relates to the MESSIAH. It foretels, that, in the Fulneſs of Time, He ſhould *finiſh the Tranſgreſſion* †; reſtrain and ſuppreſs the Power of Corruption, by purifying to Himſelf a peculiar People. — Should *make an End of Sin* ‡; by ſealing up or ſecreting its Guilt, and totally aboliſhing its condemning Power—Should *make Reconciliation for Iniquity*; by ſuſtaining the Vengeance due to Sinners, and fully ſatisfying the divine Juſtice for all their Offences.

But, as to ſuffer Puniſhment, is one Thing; and to obey the Precept, is another: as Pardon of Sin,

* Dan. ix. 24. † כלא ‡ חתם

does by no Means complete the Privilege of Juſtification: it is added, that the MESSIAH ſhould alſo *bring in an everlaſting Righteouſneſs*—*A Righteouſneſs*, or an adequate and perfect Conformity to all the Dictates of the Law. Which conſiſts, in an habitual Holineſs of Nature, and an actual Obedience of Life—This He ſhould not barely publiſh, but accompliſh and *bring in* *. That it may be preſented both to GOD and Man; to GOD, for the Reparation of his violated Law; to Man, for the Juſtification of his obnoxious Perſon—That this Righteouſneſs ſhould be *everlaſting*; not ſuch as may be compared to the Morning Cloud, which ſoon paſſeth away; or to the early Dew, which is ſoon dried up; but ſuch as will out-laſt the Hills, on which the latter ſhines; and out-laſt the Skies, through which the former ſails. A Righteouſneſs, whoſe Merits extend to every Period and every Action of our Lives; and when once made ours by Imputation, remains and will remain our unalienable Property.—To this all the Saints, who, in antient Generations, pleaſed GOD, owe their Acceptance; on this, all the Children of Men, who, in future Ages, hope for his Favour, muſt rely; by this the whole Aſſembly of the Bleſſed, will be invariably and eternally precious in his Sight.—Exalted Character! Can it be applicable to any Thing leſs,

* להביא I think, muſt ſignify more than to *publiſh* or *preach*. Had this been all that the Angel was commiſſioned to declare, לבשר or להגיד would probably have been uſed.—The Word implies ſuch *a bringing in* (the Original is the ſame) as when *Abel* brought his Sacrifice to the Altar, for the divine Acceptance; and *Eſau* brought his Veniſon into the Chamber, for his Father's Uſe. *Gen.* iv. 4. xxvii. 31.

leſs, than the Righteouſneſs of the incarnate GOD? Surely, None can imagine, that *Daniel* would ſpeak in ſuch a *magnificent* Strain of any *human* Righteouſneſs; ſince, in this very Chapter, he profeſſedly depreciates Himſelf, his Fellow-ſaints, and all human Performances whatever *.

I forgot, in the proper Place, to conſult the Prophet *Jeremiah*. Let Us now refer Ourſelves to his Determination. Celebrating the SAVIOUR of *Judah* and *Iſrael*, He ſays; *This is his Name, whereby He ſhall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.* A Determination, ſo clear and ſatisfactory, as not to leave, One would almoſt conclude, any Room for Appeal.—Should the Senſe of the Paſſage be queſtioned, I think, there cannot be a more authentic Explication, than the preceding Extracts from *Iſaiah* and *Daniel*. Having the unanimous Atteſtation of two inſpired Penmen, We may venture to abide by ſuch Authority, even in Oppoſition to ſome reſpectable Names.—In the Verſe immediately foregoing, the *eſſential* Holineſs of the REDEEMER is diſplayed, under the Character of the RIGHTEOUS BRANCH.—The Sanctity, which He will *impart* to his Subjects, is intimated by his *executing Judgment and Juſtice in the Earth*.—In the Clauſe, We have quoted, his *imputed* Righteouſneſs is foretold and promiſed.—Thus, the ſeveral Sentences are diſtinct; the Deſcription of the SAVIOUR is complete; and He appears perfectly ſuited to the Exigencies of a wretched World. A World, in its worſt Eſtate, enſlaved to Satan; and in its beſt, falling ſhort of

* *O LORD, Righteouſneſs belongeth unto Thee, but unto Us Confuſion of Faces.* Ver. 7.

the Glory of GOD.—This, therefore, I take to be the grand and extenſive Meaning of the Prophet; not barely, The righteous LORD; not barely, The LORD who infuſes Righteouſneſs into ſinful Souls; but the incarnate JEHOVAH *, whoſe *mediatorial* Righteouſneſs is, by an Act of gracious Imputation, *ours*—to all the Intents of Juſtification and Salvation, ours—as much ours for theſe bleſſed Purpoſes, as if We had wrought it out, each in his own Perſon †.

Foreſeeing and contemplating theſe Bleſſings, the enraptured *Zechariah* cries out; *Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Sion; ſhout, O Daughter of Jeruſalem; behold, thy King cometh unto Thee: He is juſt, and having Salvation, lowly and riding upon an Aſs, and upon a Colt the Foal of an Aſs* ‡. — He addreſſes himſelf to *Sion* and *Jeruſalem*, to the eccleſiaſtical and civil Community. People of all Ranks and of every Character, are exhorted to *rejoice*; to rejoice

* *Jer.* xxiii. 5, 6. In theſe golden, infinitely better than golden Verſes, are characterized the divine and the human Natures of *CHRIST*, together with his mediatorial Office. The *divine* Nature; in that He enjoys the Honours of the GODHEAD, and poſſeſſes the incommunicable Name JEHOVAH.—The *human* Nature; in that He was to be *raiſed up unto David*, and ſpring as a Branch from his Root.—The *mediatorial* Office; in that He is the *Righteouſneſs* of his People, and the *Salvation* of Sinners.

† WITSIUS, ſpeaking of the *mediatorial* Righteouſneſs, has written in *Latin*, what *Aſpaſio* expreſſes in *Engliſh*; *Per illam Obedientiam tota Multitudo illorum, qui ad Ipſum pertinent*, juſti conſtituuntur; *id eſt, cenſentur Jus habere ad æternam Vitam, non minus quam ſi quilibet eorum in propria Perſona illam Obedientiam præſtitiſſet.* Lib. II. cap. v.

‡ Zech. ix. 9.

rejoice *greatly*; nay, to expreſs the Joy of their Heart, by loud *Hallelujahs*, and triumphant *Exclamations*.—What is the Cauſe of this general Delight? What can fill both Church and State with ſuch high Satisfaction? *Thy King cometh unto Thee*; even that glorious KING, who rules in Heaven, and rules in the Heart; whoſe Service is Freedom, and whoſe Laws are Love. He comes, to be made Fleſh, and to dwell in thy Nature.—*He is juſt*; divinely righteous in his Perſon; conſummately righteous in his Life; and fulfils all Righteouſneſs in thy Stead.—*Having Salvation*; not ſetting Thee to procure it, but procuring it for Thee. Bringing with Him a great, a complete, an eternal Salvation; fully prepared, in all Points finiſhed, and free for thy Acceptance.—That none may be diſcouraged, and none deterred, from applying to this PRINCE of Peace, He is, amidſt all the Honours of his Sovereignty, *lowly:* does not abhor the Baſeſt, will not deſpiſe the Meaneſt: to the Poor and Worthleſs his Goſpel is preached, for the Guilty and Abominable his Benefits are intended.—As an Emblem, as a Proof, of this moſt amiable and condeſcending Goodneſs, *He will ride*; not like the Conquerors of the Nations, in a ſplendid triumphal Chariot, or on a richly capariſoned Steed; but upon the moſt mean and deſpicable of all Animals, *an Aſs:* nay, what is ſtill more deſpicable, on *a* rude undiſciplined *Colt*, *the* wayward *Foal of an Aſs* *.

And

* Becauſe ſome profane Scoffers have preſumed to ridicule this very remarkable Incident of our LORD's Life, ſome Interpreters of Note have endeavoured to reſcue it from their *abuſive* Attempts, by obſerving—"That

And now—ſince my *Theron* confeſſes Himſelf to be *miſerable, and poor, and naked:* ſince the Eyes of his

" the *Eaſtern* Aſſes are much larger and more graceful " than ours. That Patriarchs and Judges thought it no " Diſgrace to ride upon them."

This Obſervation has, I fear, more of *falſe Delicacy*, than of real Truth, or Chriſtian Simplicity. In the *Patriarchal* Ages, I acknowledge, Perſons of high Diſtinction thought it no Diſhonour, to appear on this Animal. But I very much queſtion, whether the ſame Faſhion ſubſiſted, or the ſame Way of Thinking prevailed, in the Reign of *Tiberius Cæſar*. The Apoſtle mentions, not Aſſes, but Horſes, as the uſual Means of Conveyance. See *Jam.* iii. 3.—Nay, I am ſtrongly inclined to ſuſpect, that the plain primitive Cuſtom was ſuperſeded, even in the Days of *Zechariah*. For, long before this Time I find, that *Solomon had four thouſand Stalls of Horſes for his Chariots, and twelve thouſand Horſemen*; and that *Horſes were brought to Him out of Egypt, and divers other Countries*, 1 Kings iv. 26. x. 28, 29. From this Period, it is probable, none but the poor and inferior Sort of People rode upon Aſſes.—When *Iſaiah* propheſied, *The Land was full of Horſes*, Iſai. ii. 7. Under the *Perſian* Monarchy, when *Zechariah* flouriſhed, Horſes were in ſtill greater Repute. Well therefore might the Prophet ſay, with Wonder and Delight—*lowly*; *and*, as a Demonſtration thereof, *riding upon an Aſs!* Whereas, if the Proceſſion had been performed on a graceful Animal, and in a reſpectable Manner, how was this an Evidence of our REDEEMER's *Lowlineſs*.

They, who would *dignify* this Action, any otherwiſe than from its greatly to be admired Abaſement, ſeem to have forgotten the Stable, the Manger, and the Croſs.—They, who would *ennoble* this Animal, from any Conſideration whatever, ſeem to miſtake entirely the Deſign of the Prophet. He intends to exhibit a Picture, where Magnificence and Humiliation meet in their Extremes. A King, clothed with Righteouſneſs, and diſpenſing Salvation; yet deſpiſed and rejected, by the Wiſe, the Mighty, the Proud. Supremely majeſtic and deſirable, to the Eye of Faith; yet having no Form nor Comeli-

neſs,

his Underſtanding are enlightened, to ſee the Impurity of his Heart, and the Imperfection of his Righteouſneſs—what Advice, chearing and ſalutary, ſhall I ſuggeſt? O! let Him liſten to an ADVISER, infinitely more able and compaſſionate. Liſten to HIM, who is the ANTIENT OF DAYS, and the WISDOM OF GOD; *I counſel Thee*, ſays the Bleſſed *JESUS*, *to buy of me Gold tried in the Fire, that Thou mayeſt be rich; and white Raiment, that Thou mayeſt be clothed* *.—*Gold!* What can this denote, but all thoſe ſpiritual Treaſures, which are hid in *CHRIST?* Which are, in Meaſure, unſearchable; in Value, ineſtimable; in Duration, eternal.—*White Raiment!* Surely this muſt ſignify the Righteouſneſs of our REDEEMER; which is all Purity, and all Perfection. Which clothes the Soul, as a moſt ſuitable and commodious Garment arrays the Body. Which will preſent the Believer, void of Shame, and free from Blemiſh; will preſent Him, with Confidence and Honour, before the Throne of the MAJESTY in the Heavens.

This,

neſs, in the Eye of Senſe. Higher, far higher than the Heavens, yet offering Himſelf and his Benefits to the Vulgar, the Sordid, the Vile.

Was it a *mean* Attitude? *Exceedingly* mean? Mean even to *Contempt?* I make no Scruple to grant it: nay, I make my Boaſt of it! It is for the Honour of my LORD's Condeſcenſion: it is for the utter Confuſion of all worldly Pomp and Grandeur: and it is for the unſpeakable Comfort of my ſinful Soul.—Moſt charming Humility! Moſt endearing Gentleneſs! HE, *who rideth upon the Heavens as it were upon an Horſe, and maketh the Clouds his Chariot*, to atone for my Pride, and to encourage my Hope, diſdained not, in the Days of his Fleſh, to ride upon an Aſs.

* Rev. iii. 18.

This, to uſe the delicate Language, and amiable Images of *Iſaiah*—*This* Doctrine, embraced by a realizing Faith, *is the* only Pillow of *Reſt*, *wherewith Ye may cauſe the weary* and heavy-laden Soul *to find Repoſe*; *and this is the* ſovereign Cordial, prepared by infinite Mercy, for the *Refreſhment* of anxious and deſponding Tranſgreſſors. O! Let Us not be in the Number of thoſe proud *and* refractory Creatures, who, though *they* infinitely needed, yet *would not hear* * the gracious News, nor receive the unſpeakable Benefit.—In this Reſpect, and in this moſt eminently, is that other Saying of the ſame ſublime Teacher, true; *The LORD of Hoſts ſhall be for a Crown of Glory, and for a Diadem of Beauty, to the Reſidue of his People* †. Shall we tear from our Temples, or reject with Diſdain, this unfading and heavenly Ornament; in order to ſubſtitute a mean and tawdry Chaplet of our own?

Let me add a pertinent Paſſage from one of our celebrated dramatic Writers. Which, if proper in *his* Senſe, will be incomparably more ſo, according to *our* Manner of Application.

——————— *It were contemning,*
With impious ſelf-ſufficient Arrogance,
This Bounty of our GOD, not to accept,
With every Mark of Honour, ſuch a Gift.

I might proceed to urge this Expoſtulation of the Poet, as I might eaſily have multiplied my Quotations from holy Writ. But, ſtudious of Brevity, I reſign both, without farther Enlargement, to your own Meditation. Yet, more ſtudious of my Friend's Happi-

* Iſai. xxviii. 12. † Iſai. xxviii. 5.

Happineſs, I cannot conclude without wiſhing Him an Intereſt, a clear and eſtabliſhed Intereſt, in this everlaſting Righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*. For ſo, and ſo only, can He have *everlaſting Conſolation and good Hope through Grace*.—I am, my dear *Theron*,

Inviolably Yours,

ASPASIO.

P. S. Oppoſite to the Room in which I write, is a moſt agreeable Proſpect of the Gardens and the Fields. *Theſe*, covered with Herbage, and loaded with Corn: *thoſe* adorned with Flowers, and abounding with Eſculents. All appearing with ſo florid and ſo beautiful an Aſpect, that they really ſeem, in Conformity to the *Pſalmiſt*'s Deſcription, even to *laugh and ſing*.—Let me juſt obſerve, That all theſe fine Scenes, all theſe rich Productions ſprung — from what? From the *Diſſolution* of the reſpective Seeds. The Seeds planted by the Gardener, and the Grain ſowed by the Huſbandman, firſt periſhed in the Ground, and then the copious Increaſe aroſe.

Much after the ſame Manner, a true Faith in *CHRIST* and his Righteouſneſs ariſes—from what? From the *Ruins* of Self-ſufficiency, and the *Death* of perſonal Excellency. Let me therefore intreat my *Theron*, ſtill to take the Diary for his Counſellor; ſtill to keep an Eye on the Depravity of his Nature, and the Miſcarriages of his Life. The more clearly We ſee, the more deeply We feel, our

Guilt and our Misery, the more highly shall We value the Obedience of our blessed SURETY.—In such a Heart, Faith will flourish as a Rose, and lift up its Head like a Cedar in *Lebanon*. To such a Soul, the great REDEEMER's Righteousness will be welcome, as Waters to the thirsty Soil, or as Rivers in the sandy Desart.

LETTER V.

ASPASIO *to* THERON.

Dear THERON,

GIVE me leave to relate an uncommon Accident; which happened a little while ago, in this Neighbourhood; and of which I myself was a Spectator.—The Day was the Sabbath; the Place appropriated to divine Worship, was the Scene of this *remarkable* Affair; and the Instant of its taking Place, was the Beginning of the Sermon. When the Ambassador of *CHRIST*, risen with a venerable Aspect, and addressing his Audience with becoming Gravity, drew Attention "still as Night, "or Summer's Noon-tide Air."

At this Interval of deep Composure, a Boy came running into the Church, breathless and trembling. He told, but in a low Voice, those who stood near, that

that a Preſs-gang * was advancing, to beſiege the Doors, and arreſt the Sailors.—*An Alarm* was immediately taken. The Seamen, with much Hurry, and no ſmall Anxiety, began to ſhift for themſelves. The reſt of the Congregation, perceiving an unuſual Stir, were ſtruck with Surprize.—A Whiſper of Enquiry ran from Seat to Seat; which increaſed, by Degrees, into a confuſed Murmur, and a ſtrange Commotion. No One could inform his Neighbour. Therefore, every One was left to ſolve the Appearance, from the Suggeſtions of a *timorous Imagination*. Some ſuſpected, the Town was on fire. Some were apprehenſive of an Invaſion from the *Spaniards*. Others looked up, and looked round, to ſee if the Walls were not giving way, and the Roof falling upon their Heads.—In a few Moments, the Conſternation became general. The Men ſtood like Statues, in ſilent Amazement, and unavailing Perplexity. The Women ſhrieked aloud; fell into Fits; ſunk to the Ground in a Swoon. Nothing was ſeen, but *wild Diſorder*; nothing heard, but *tumultuous Clamour*.—Drowned was the Preacher's Voice. Had He ſpoke in Thunder, his Meſſage would ſcarce have been regarded. To have gone on with his Work, amidſt ſuch a Ferment of ſtunning Sounds and aſtoniſhed Minds, had been like arguing with a Whirlwind, or talking to a Tempeſt.

This

* The Reader, it is hoped, will excuſe whatever may appear *low*, or ſavour of the *Plebeian*, in any of theſe Circumſtances. If *Aſpaſio* had ſet Himſelf to *invent* the Deſcription of a Panic, He would probably have formed it upon ſome more raiſed and dignified Incident. But as this was a real *Matter of Fact*, which lately happened in one of our Sea-port Towns; Truth, even in a plain Dreſs, may poſſibly be no leſs acceptable than Fiction, tricked up with the moſt ſplendid Embelliſhments.

This brought to my Mind that great *tremendous Day*, when the Heavens ſhall paſs away; when the Earth ſhall be diſſolved; and all its Inhabitants receive their final Doom.—If, at ſuch Incidents of very inferior Dread, our Hearts are ready to fail; what unknown and inconceivable Aſtoniſhment muſt ſeize the guilty Conſcience, when the Hand of the ALMIGHTY ſhall open thoſe unparalleled Scenes of Wonder, Deſolation, and Horror! —When the Trumpet ſhall ſound—The Dead ariſe —The World be in Flames—The JUDGE on the Throne—and all Mankind at the Bar!

The Trumpet ſhall ſound *, ſays the prophetic Teacher. And how alarming, how ſtupendous the Summons! Nothing equal to it, nothing like it, was ever heard through all the Regions of the Univerſe, or all the Revolutions of Time.—When conflicting Armies have diſcharged the bellowing Artillery of War, or when victorious Armies have ſhouted for Joy of the Conqueſt, the Seas and Shores have rung, the Mountains and Plains have echoed. But the Voice of the Archangel, and the Trump of GOD, will reſound from Pole to Pole. It will ſhake the Pillars of Earth, and ſtartle the Dungeon of Hell.—Stronger, ſtranger ſtill! It will penetrate even the deepeſt Receſſes of the Tomb. It will pour its amazing Thunder into all thoſe Abodes of Silence. The Dead, the very Dead, ſhall hear.

When the Trumpet has ſounded, *the Dead ſhall ariſe*.—In a Moment, in the Twinkling of an Eye, the Graves open; the monumental Piles are cleft aſunder; the Families, the Nations under-ground, ſtart into Day. What an immenſe Harveſt of Men and

* 1 Cor. xv. 52.

and Women, ſpringing up from the Caverns of the Earth, and the Depths of the Sea! Stand a while my Soul, and contemplate the wonderful Spectacle. —*Adam* formed in Paradiſe, and the Babe born but Yeſterday, the earlieſt Ages, and lateſt Generations, meet upon the ſame Level. *Jews* and *Gentiles*, *Greeks* and *Barbarians*, People of all Climes and Languages, unite in the promiſcuous Throng. Here, thoſe vaſt Armies, which, like Swarms of Locuſts, covered Countries; which, with an irreſiſtible Sweep, over-run Empires; here they all appear, and here they all are loſt. Loſt, like the ſmall Drop of a Bucket, when plunged amidſt the unfathomable and boundleſs Ocean.—O! the Multitudes! the Multitudes *! which theſe Eyes ſhall ſurvey, when GOD *calleth the Heavens from above, and the Earth that He may judge his People.* What Shame muſt fluſh the guilty Cheek! What Anguiſh wound the polluted Breaſt! To have all their filthy Practices, and infamous Tempers, expoſed before this innumerable Croud of Witneſſes!—Fly, my *Theron*; and fly, my Soul; inſtantly let Us fly, earneſtly let Us fly, to the purifying Blood of *JESUS*. That all our Sins may be blotted out; that We may be found *unblameable* and *unreproveable*, in the Preſence of the aſſembled World; and, what is infinitely more to be revered, in the Sight of the omnipotent GOD.

When the Swarm iſſues, the Hive ſhall *burn*. There is no more Need of this habitable Globe.

The

* If, as it is commonly ſuppoſed, the Earth contains at any one Period of Time, no leſs than *four hundred Millions* of Souls; what a Congregation muſt all thoſe Generations make, which have ſucceeded each other for ſeven thouſand Years!

The Elect have fought the good Fight, and finished their Course. The Wicked have been tried, and found incorrigible. The important Drama is ended. Every Actor has performed his Part. Now therefore the Scenes are taken down; and the Stage is demolished.—*Woe be to the Earth, and to the Works thereof!* Its Streams are turned into Pitch, its Dust into Brimstone; and the Breath of the ALMIGHTY, like a Torrent of Fire, enkindles the Whole. See! see! how the Conflagration rages—spreads—prevails over all! The Forests are in a Blaze, and the Mountains are wrapt in Flame. Cities, Kingdoms, Continents, sink in the burning Deluge. *London*, *Britain*, *Europe* are no more. Through all the Receptacles of Water, through all the Tracts of Land, through the whole Extent of Air, nothing is discernable, but one vast, prodigious, fiery Ruin. —Where now are the *Treasures* of the Covetous? Where the *Possessions* of the Mighty? Where the *Delights* of the Voluptuary?—How wise, how happy are they, whose Portion is lodged in heavenly Mansions! Their Inheritance is incorruptible. Such as the last Fire cannot reach, nor the Dissolution of Nature impair.

We look upwards. The azure Vault cleaves. That stately Expanse is rolled back like a Scroll; the Regions of Bliss are seen; and the JUDGE, the JUDGE appears! *He cometh*, cries a mighty Seraph, the Herald * of his Approach, *He cometh to*

* It seems, according to the Apostle's Representation, that, introductory to the Resurrection of the Dead, there will be *A Shout, the Voice of the Archangel, and the Trump of GOD.* 1 Thess. iv. 16.—First, *A Shout* of Joy and Triumph breaks from the Skies; made by Millions of attendant

to judge the World in Righteouſneſs, and miniſter true Judgment unto the People!—He cometh, not as formerly, in the Habit of a Servant, but clad with uncreated Glory, and arrayed in Light inacceſſible. He cometh, not meanly followed by twelve weak Diſciples, but magnificently attended with the Armies of Heaven. Angels and Archangels form his Retinue; Principalities and Powers wait at his Feet: the Cherubim and Seraphim are upon the Wing to execute his Commands.—Behold Him, ye faithful Followers of the LAMB; and wonder and love. This is HE, who bore all *your* Iniquities on the ignominious Croſs. This is HE, who fulfilled all Righteouſneſs for the Juſtification of *your* Perſons.—Behold Him, ye Deſpiſers of his Grace; and wonder and periſh. This is HE, whoſe merciful Overtures you have contemned, and on whoſe precious Blood You have trampled.

The great *white Throne* *, beyond Deſcription auguſt and formidable, is erected. The KING of Heaven, the LORD of Glory, takes his Seat on the dreadful Tribunal. *Mercy*, on his Right-hand, diſplays the Olive-branch of Peace, and holds forth the Crown of Righteouſneſs. *Juſtice*, on his Left, poiſes the impartial Scale, and unſheaths

attendant Spirits, or by all the Companies of Heaven.—Then follows *the Voice of the Archangel*, proclaiming the Approach of the REDEEMER; which, though heard ſingly through the vaſt Expanſe, will probably be louder than thoſe united Acclamations.—Laſt of all; *the Trumpet of GOD* ſounds, and iſſues a Summons to the Dead, more awful and more majeſtic, than each preceding Alarm; cloſing the old, and opening the new World, with inconceivable Solemnity, and the moſt formidable Grandeur.

* Rev. xx. 11.

ſheaths the Sword of Vengeance. While *Wiſdom* and *Holineſs*, brighter than ten thouſand Suns, beam in his divine Aſpect.—What are all the preceding Events, to this new Scene of Dignity and Awe? The Peals of Thunder, ſounding in the Archangel's Trumpet; the Blaze of a burning World, and the ſtrong Convulſions of expiring Nature; the unnumbered Myriads of the Dead, ſtarting into inſtantaneous Life, and thronging the aſtoniſhed Skies; all theſe ſeem *familiar* Incidents, compared with the Appearance of the incarnate JEHOVAH.—Amazement, more than Amazement, is all around. Terror and Glory unite in their Extremes. From the Sight of his majeſtic Eye, from the inſupportable Splendors of his Face, the Earth itſelf and the very Heavens *flee away* *.—How then? Oh! how ſhall the Ungodly *ſtand?* Stand in his angry Preſence, and draw near to this conſuming Fire?

Yet draw near they muſt, and take their Tryal—their deciſive Tryal at his righteous Bar. Every Action comes under Examination. For each idle Word they muſt give Account. Not ſo much as a ſecret Thought eſcapes this exact Scrutiny.—How ſhall the Criminals, the impenitent Criminals, either conceal their Guilt, or elude the Sentence? They have to do with a Sagacity, too keen to be deceived; with a Power, too ſtrong to be reſiſted; and (O! terrible, terrible Conſideration!) with a Severity of moſt juſt Diſpleaſure, that will *never* relent, *never* be intreated more.—What ghaſtly Deſpair lours on their pale Looks! What racking Agonies rend their diſtracted Hearts! The bloody Axe and the torturing Wheel,

* Rev. xx. 11.

Wheel, are Eaſe, are Downe, compared with their prodigious Woe. And (O holy GOD! wonderful in thy Doings! fearful in thy Judgments!) even this prodigious Woe is the *gentleſt* of Viſitations, compared with that Indignation and Wrath, which are hanging over their guilty Heads—which are even now falling on all the Sons of Rebellion—which will plunge them deep in aggravated Miſery and endleſs Deſtruction.

And is there a laſt Day? and muſt there come
A ſure, a fix'd, irrevocable Doom?

Surely then, to uſe the Words of a pious Prelate *, it ſhould be "the main Care of our Lives and "Deaths, what ſhall give Us Peace and Acceptation before the dreadful Tribunal of GOD. "What but Righteouſneſs? What Righteouſneſs "or whoſe? Ours or *CHRIST*'s? Ours, in the "inherent Graces wrought in Us, in the holy "Works wrought by Us? Or *CHRIST*'s, in "his moſt perfect Obedience, and meritorious Satisfaction, wrought for Us, and applied to Us? "The *Popiſh* Faction is for the former. We Proteſtants are for the latter. GOD is as direct "on our Side, as his Word can make Him; every "where blazoning the Defects of our own Righteouſneſs, every where extolling the perfect Obedience of our REDEEMER's."

Behold! ſays the everlaſting KING, *I lay in Sion, for a Foundation, a Stone; a tried Stone; a precious Corner-ſtone; a ſure Foundation:* HE THAT BELIEVETH, SHALL NOT MAKE HASTE †.

* Biſhop *Hall.* † Iſai. xxviii. 16.

As this Text contains ſo noble a Diſplay of our SAVIOUR's conſummate Ability for his great Work; as it is admirably calculated, to preſerve the Mind from diſtreſſing Fears, and to ſettle it in a ſteady Tranquility; You will give me leave to touch it curſorily with my Pen. Juſt as I ſhould deſcant upon it in Converſation, was I now ſitting in one of your agreeable Arbors, and enjoying your more agreeable Company.

How beautiful the Gradation! How lively the Deſcription! and how very important the practical Improvement! Or I might ſay, the Inſcription which is engraven on this wonderful Stone.—*Behold!* Intended to rouſe and fix our moſt attentive Regard. The GOD of Heaven ſpeaks. He ſpeaks, and every Syllable is Balm; every Sentence is rich with Conſolation. If ever therefore We have Ears to hear, let it be to this SPEAKER, and on this Occaſion.

A Stone. Every Thing elſe is ſliding Sand; is yielding Air; is a breaking Bubble. Wealth will prove a vain Shadow; Honour an empty Breath; Pleaſure a deluſory Dream; our own Righteouſneſs a Spider's Web. If on theſe We rely, Diſappointment muſt enſue, and Shame be inevitable. Nothing but *CHRIST*, nothing but *CHRIST*, can ſtably ſupport our ſpiritual Intereſts, and realize our Expectations of true Happineſs. And, bleſſed be the divine Goodneſs! He is, for this Purpoſe, not a Stone only, but

A tried Stone. Tried, in the Days of his Humanity, by all the Vehemence of Temptations, and all the Weight of Afflictions: yet, like Gold from the Furnace, rendered more ſhining and illuſtrious by the

the fiery Scrutiny.—Tried, under the Capacity of a SAVIOUR, by Millions and Millions of depraved, wretched, ruined Creatures; who have always found Him *perfectly able*, and as *perfectly willing*, to expiate the moſt enormous Guilt—to deliver from the moſt inveterate Corruptions—and ſave, to the very uttermoſt, all that come unto GOD through Him.

A Corner-ſtone. Which not only ſuſtains, but unites the Edifice: incorporating both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, Believers of various Languages, and manifold Denominations—here, in one harmonious Bond of brotherly Love—hereafter, in one common Participation of eternal Joy.

A precious Stone. More precious than Rubies; the Pearl of great Price; and the Deſire of all Nations. Precious, with regard to the divine Dignity of his Perſon, and the unequaled Excellency of his mediatorial Offices. In theſe, and in all reſpects, greater than *Jonah*—wiſer than *Solomon*—fairer than the Children of Men—chiefeſt among ten thouſand—and, to the awakened Sinner, or enlightened Believer, *altogether lovely* *.

A ſure Foundation †. Such as no Preſſure can ſhake: equal, more than equal to every Weight; even to Sin, the heavieſt Load in the World.—*The Rock of Ages*; ſuch as never has failed, never will fail, thoſe humble Penitents, who caſt their Burden upon the LORD REDEEMER; who roll all ‡ their

* Cant. v. 16.

† *Fundamentum fundatiſſimum.*

‡ *Roll*—This is the exact Senſe of the ſacred Phraſe, גל אל יהוה Pſal. xxii. 8. xxxvii. 5. Prov. xvi. 3. I am not ignorant, that ſome People have preſumed to *cenſure*,

their Guilt, and fix all their Hopes, on this immoveable Baſis.—Or, as the Words *may* be rendered, *A Foundation* *! *A Foundation!* There is a fine Spirit of Vehemency in the Sentence, thus underſtood. It ſpeaks the Language of Exultation, and expreſſes an important Diſcovery. That which Mankind infinitely want; that which Multitudes ſeek, and are not able to find; it is here! it is here! This, this is the Foundation for their Pardon, their Peace, their eternal Felicity.

Whoſoever

and many have been *ſhy* of uſing, this bold and vigorous Metaphor. Which nevertheleſs appears to me, the moſt juſt, the moſt ſignificant, and therefore the moſt truly beautiful, that could be uſed on the Occaſion.

A Burden, that is manageable and comparatively light, We *carry*, We *caſt*, We *throw*. But that which is extremely ponderous and quite unwieldy, We move only by rolling. Accordingly, Stones of an enormous Size, are called by the Oriental Writers, *Stones of Rolling*. *Ut-pote ponderoſiores, quam ut ſupportari queant.* Ezra v. 8.—Conſider the Expreſſion in this View, and nothing can repreſent, with greater or with equal Energy, that prodigious Load, which, heavier than the Sand of the Sea, oppreſſes the guilty Conſcience.—By ſubſtituting any other Word, We enfeeble and dilute the Senſe: We loſe the capital and ſtriking Idea.

Vain Man would be wiſe. Let Him not then, for the Credit of his Ingenuity, adventure to correct the Language of Omniſcience. This, if any Thing in Nature, is

Periculoſæ plenum Opus Aleæ.

This will be ſure to diſcover, not his fine Taſte, but his *groveling* Apprehenſion, and his *rampant* Pride. Let Him improve, with the Plaiſterer's Bruſh, the glowing Colours of the Rainbow. Let Him heighten, by Fuller's Soap, the Luſtre of the new fallen Snows. This will be a more modeſt Attempt, and a much eaſier Taſk, than to make an *Index expurgatorius*, or a Table of *Errata*, when the SPIRIT of Inſpiration dictates.

* מוסד מוסד

Whoſoever believeth, though preſſed with Adverſities, or ſurrounded by Dangers, *ſhall not make haſte* *. But, free from tumultuous and perplexing Thoughts, preſerved from raſh and precipitate Steps, He ſhall poſſeſs his Soul in Patience. Knowing the Sufficiency of thoſe Merits, and the Fidelity of that Grace, on which he has repoſed his Confidence, ſhall quietly and without Perturbation wait for an expected End.—And not only amidſt the perilous or diſaſtrous Changes of Life, but even in the Day of everlaſting Judgment, ſuch Perſons ſhall *ſtand with Boldneſs*. They ſhall look up, to the grand ARBITRATOR—look round, on all the Solemnity of his Appearance—look forward, to the unalterable Sentence—and neither feel Anxiety, nor fear Damnation.

* *Shall not make haſte*, לא יחיש This metaphorical Expreſſion, though it might be very intelligible to an *Hebrew*, is to an *Engliſh* Reader, like ſome fine Picture placed in a *diſadvantageous* Light. We may poſſibly illuſtrate the Prophet's Meaning, and exemplify his Aſſertion, if We compare the Conduct of *Moſes*, with that of the *Iſraelites*, on viewing the fatal Cataſtrophe of *Dathan* and *Abiram*.—When the Earth trembled under their Feet; when the Ground opened its horrid Jaws; when the preſumptuous Sinners went down alive into the Pit; when the tremendous Chaſm cloſed upon the ſcreaming Wretches; the Children of *Iſrael*, it is written, *fled at the Cry of them*. Fled, in wild and haſty Confuſion; *for they ſaid, Leſt the Earth ſwallow up Us alſo*.—But *Moſes*, who denounced the dreadful Doom; *Moſes*, who was ſure of the divine Protection; *Moſes* made no ſuch precipitate or diſorderly *Haſte*. He ſtood calm and compoſed: ſaw the whole alarming Tranſaction, without any uneaſy Emotions of Fear, or any unneceſſary Attempts to eſcape. So that *his Behaviour* ſeems to be a clear and appoſite Comment on *Iſaiah*'s *Phraſe*. See *Numb.* xvi.

Such, in that Day of Terrors, ſhall he ſeen
To face the Thunders with a godlike Mein.
The Planets drop; their Thoughts are fix'd above:
The Center ſhakes; their Hearts diſdain to move.

This Portion of Scripture, which, I hope, will both delight and edify my Friend, recals our Attention to the Subject of my preſent Letter—to thoſe propitiatory Sufferings, and that juſtifying Righteouſneſs, which, imputed to Sinners, are the Ground of their Comfort, and the Bulwark of their Security.—We have heard *Moſes* and the Prophets. What ſay the Writers of the *New Teſtament?* They, whoſe Underſtandings were opened by the "WONDERFUL COUNSELLOR," to diſcern the Meaning of the antient Oracles. Who muſt therefore be the moſt competent Judges of their true Import, and our ſureſt Guides in ſettling their Senſe.—Do they patronize our Interpretation of the Prophets? Do they ſet their Seal to the Authenticity of our Doctrine?

St. *Luke*, in his eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, has preſerved this weighty Declaration of the Apoſtles; *We believe, that, through the Grace of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, We ſhall be ſaved, even as they* *. Here the Thing is implied.—St. *Peter*, in the Introduction to one of his Theological Epiſtles, thus addreſſes his happy Correſpondents: *To them that have obtained like precious Faith, in the Righteouſneſs* † *of our*

* Acts xv. 11.

† 2 *Pet.* i. 1. The Phraſe is πιστιν εν δικαιοσυνη, which moſt naturally ſignifies *Faith* in *the Righteouſneſs*; expreſſing

our GOD and SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST. Here the Point is expreſly aſſerted.—With equal Clearneſs is the Doctrine delivered by *Matthew* the Evangeliſt; *Seek ye firſt the Kingdom of GOD and his Righteouſneſs* *. What can the *Kingdom of GOD* mean? An Experience of the Power, and an Enjoyment of the Privileges of the Goſpel. What are we to underſtand by *his Righteouſneſs?* Surely, the Righteouſneſs which is worthy of this grand Appellation, and peculiar to that bleſſed Inſtitution.

Would We learn, What is the great and diſtinguiſhing Peculiarity of the Goſpel? St. *Paul* informs Us; *Therein the Righteouſneſs of GOD is revealed, from Faith to Faith.* As this Text leads Us into the Epiſtle to the *Romans*—as this Epiſtle is, both for the Propriety of its Method, and for the Importance of its Doctrine, ſingularly excellent—it may not be amiſs, to examine its Structure, and enquire into its Deſign.

The Apoſtle writes to a promiſcuous People: who had been converted, partly from *Judaiſm*, partly from *Gentiliſm*. His Aim is, to ſtrike at the very Root of their former Errors reſpectively—to turn

preſſing the *Object*, on which the Faith of Chriſtians is fixed.—If We retain the common Tranſlation, it proves another very momentous Truth: that *the Righteouſneſs of our GOD, even of our SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST*, is the one *meritorious* procuring Cauſe of *all* ſpiritual Bleſſings; of Faith, as well as of Fruition; of Grace, as well as of Glory.—I ſay *our* GOD; ſo *JESUS CHRIST* is ſtyled in the Original; in the third Verſe, his Power is called *divine*; and I wonder, how the Tranſlators were induced, to tranſpoſe that important Pronoun, *our*.

* Matt. vi. 33.

turn them *wholly* to the ſuperabundant Grace of GOD, and eſtabliſh them *ſolely* on the all-ſufficient Merits of *CHRIST*.

The *Gentiles* were, for the moſt part, groſly ignorant of GOD, and ſtupidly negligent of inviſible Intereſts. If Any among them had any Regard to the DEITY; their Virtues, they imagined, were meritorious of all that the DEITY could beſtow. If they committed Sin; Sin, they ſuppoſed, might eaſily be expiated by Sacrifices *. A few of their judicious Sages taught, that the moſt probable Means of obtaining Pardon, was a ſincere Reformation of Life.

The *Jews*, as it is well known, placed a mighty Dependence on their Affinity to *Abraham*, and the Covenant made with their Fathers; on their Adherence

* WITSII *Animadverſiones Irenicæ*, Cap. vii.—A choice little Piece of *polemical* Divinity, perhaps the very beſt that is extant. In which the moſt important Controverſies are fairly ſtated, accurately diſcuſſed, and judiciouſly determined; with a Perſpicuity of Senſe, and a Solidity of Reaſoning, exceeded by nothing, but the remarkable Candour of the Sentiments.

The *Oeconomia Fœderum*, written by the ſame Hand, is a Body of Divinity; in its Method ſo well digeſted—in its Doctrines ſo truly evangelical—and (what is not very uſual with our ſyſtematic Writers) in its Language ſo refined and elegant—in its Manner ſo affectionate and animating—that I would venture to recommend it, to every young Student in Divinity: I would not ſcruple to riſk all my Reputation upon the Merits of this Performance: and I cannot but lament it, as one of my greateſt Loſſes, that I was *no ſooner* acquainted with this moſt excellent Author.—All whoſe Works, have ſuch a Delicacy of Compoſition, and ſuch a ſweet Savour of Holineſs, that I know not any Compariſon more proper to repreſent their true Character, than *the golden Pot which had Manna*; and was — outwardly, *bright* with burniſhed Gold—inwardly, *rich* with heavenly Food.

herence to the Letter of the moral Law, and their ſcrupulous Performance of ceremonial Inſtitutions.—*Gentiles* and *Jews* agreeing in this Miſtake, that they looked for the Pardon of Guilt, and the Attainment of Happineſs, from ſome Services done, or ſome Qualities acquired by *Themſelves.*

Againſt theſe Errors the zealous Apoſtle draws his Pen. He enters the Liſts like a true Champion of *CHRIST*, in the moſt ſpirited and heroic Manner imaginable. *I am not aſhamed of the Goſpel of CHRIST:* for, however it may be deemed Fooliſhneſs by the polite *Greeks*, or prove a Stumbling-block to the carnal *Jews*, *it is the Power of GOD unto* * *Salvation:* it is the grand Inſtrument, which he has ordained for this bleſſed Purpoſe, and which he will certainly crown with the deſired Succeſs.—Whence has the Goſpel this very peculiar Power? Becauſe, therein a *Righteouſneſs is revealed*; not demanded of impotent Sinners, but revealed and made ready for their free Acceptance. A true and perfect Righteouſneſs, which obliterates all Guilt, and furniſhes a ſolid Title to eternal Life.—What Righteouſneſs is this? The Righteouſneſs, not of Sincerity, but of Perfection; not of Man, but *of GOD.* Which was promiſed by GOD in the Scriptures; was introduced by GOD in the Perſon of his SON; and, on Account of its conſummate Excellency, is both acceptable and available in his Sight.

This Righteouſneſs is *from Faith to Faith* †: held forth, as it were, by a promiſing GOD, and apprehended

* Rom. i. 16.

† *Rom.* i. 17. An ingenious Friend propoſes to tranſlate the Paſſage, according to the following Connection; Δικαιοσυνη Θεου εκ πιστεως αποκαλυπτεται εις πιστιν, *The Righteouſneſs*

prehended by a believing Soul. Who, firſt, gives a firm *Aſſent* to the Goſpel; then, cordially *accepts* its Bleſſings. From a Conviction that the Doctrine is true, paſſes to a Perſuaſion that the Privileges are his own.—When this is effected, a Foundation is laid for all Happineſs; a Principle is wrought, to produce all Holineſs.

But why was it requiſite, that ſuch a Righteouſneſs ſhould be provided by GOD, and revealed in the Goſpel?—Becauſe not *Gentile*, nor *Jew*, either poſſeſſed, or could attain, any Righteouſneſs of their own: and this Righteouſneſs, though ſo abſolutely neceſſary for their fallen State, was infinitely remote from all human Apprehenſions. The latter Aſſertion is ſelf-evident. The former is particularly demonſtrated.—Firſt, with regard to the *Gentiles*. The Generality of whom, were abandoned to the moſt ſcandalous Exceſſes of Vice; and they who had eſcaped the groſſer Pollutions, fell ſhort in the Duties of natural Religion.—Next, with regard to the *Jews*.

ouſneſs of GOD by Faith, is revealed to Faith. The Propoſal is truly delicate; the Clauſe, thus tranſpoſed, is very perſpicuous; and the Doctrine, contained in it, highly important. As a farther Recommendation of the Criticiſm, We may obſerve; That δικαιοσυνη εκ πιστεως is, with the Apoſtle, a cuſtomary and a favourite Way of expreſſing Himſelf. The only Difficulty lies in the *Tranſpoſition*, which this Interpretation requires. Whether this may be admitted, I refer to the judicious Reader.—However He ſhall determine, it is, I think, from this Text undeniably certain; That Faith is not our juſtifying Righteouſneſs, but only *receptive* of it.—That there is juſt the ſame Difference between them, as between a coſtly Gift and the empty Hand; or between the Spring revealed to *Hagar*, and *Hagar*'s Act of taking the Water, for the Refreſhment of Herſelf and her Son. See *Gen.* xxi. 19.

Jews. Many of whom lived in open Violation of the external Commandment; and not One of them acted up to the internal Purity, required by the *Moſaic* Precepts.—From which Premiſes, this Concluſion is deduced; that each of them had tranſgreſſed even *their own* Rule of Action; that all of them were, on this Account, utterly inexcuſable; therefore *by the Works of the Law*, whether dictated by Reaſon, or delivered by *Moſes*, *no Mortal is juſtified* * in the Sight of GOD.

Leſt any ſhould imagine, that Righteouſneſs may be obtained, if not by a Conformity to the Law of Nature, or the Law of *Moſes*, yet by an evangelical Obedience, He farther declares; That Sinners are *juſtified freely*, without any Regard to their own Endowments, of what Kind ſoever; *through the Redemption*, the complete Redemption of *JESUS CHRIST* †. After ſuch a Manner, as may lay them low in Humiliation, even while it exalts them to the Kingdom of Heaven. After ſuch a Manner, as may bring Life and Salvation to their Souls, while it ſtrips them of all Pretence to Glorying; and conſigns the whole Honour to GOD the FATHER, and his SON *JESUS CHRIST*.

Upon

* *Rom.* iii. 20. There ſeems to be a Kind of *humbling* or *degrading* Turn in the Apoſtle's Language ουκ ἐξ ἔργων νόμου, which may poſſibly be preſerved in the Tranſlation, *No Mortal*.—We may farther obſerve the very nice and exact Manner of the ſacred Argumentation. Leſt it ſhould be ſaid, and from the Authority of St. *James*, *A Man is juſtified by Works*; our unerring Writer tacitly allows, That *before Men* this is practicable, *before Men* this is proper; but not ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ, not *before GOD*.

† Rom. iii. 24.

Upon the Whole; here are three Poſitions, of the laſt Importance—Salvation is by *Righteouſneſs*—Righteouſneſs is by *Faith—Only* by Faith, whether to the *Jew*, or to the *Gentile*. All theſe Particulars are confirmed by that ſingle Sentence, quoted from the Prophet; *The Juſt*, the truly righteous; *ſhall live*, ſhall inherit everlaſting Life; not by his own Works, but *by Faith* in the Obedience of a SAVIOUR.

In the Proſecution of this very momentous Subject, our ſacred Diſputant removes an Objection, which is as common, as it is plauſible. *Do We make void the Law through Faith?* Do We render it a vain Inſtitution; ſuch as never has been, never will be fulfilled?—*GOD forbid!* This were a flagrant Diſhonour to the Divine LEGISLATOR and his holy Commandments. [illegible]at We would utterly abhor, rather than countenance in any Degree.—On the contrary, *We eſtabliſh the Law* *; not only as We receive it for a *Rule* of Life, but as We expect no Salvation without a proper, without a *perfect* Conformity to its Injunctions.—How can this be effected? By qualifying its Senſe, and ſoftening it into an eaſier Syſtem? This were to *vacate* the Law; to deprive it of its Honour, and its End. *Its Honour*; which is the moſt refined Spirituality, and ſublime Perfection: *its End*; which is to convince of Sin, and make Way for a SAVIOUR.—We eſtabliſh the Law by an incomparably better Expedient; by believing in that great MEDIATOR, who has obeyed its every Precept;

* *Rom.* iii. 31. An inconteſtable Proof, that the Apoſtle terats of the *moral* Law.

Precept; ſuſtained its whole Penalty; and ſatisfied all its Requirements, in their utmoſt Latitude.

Farther to corroborate his Scheme, He proves it from the renowned Examples of *Abraham* and *David*.—The Inſtance of *Abraham* is ſo clear, that it wants no Comment. Any Paraphraſe would rather obſcure, than illuſtrate it.—The other, derived from the Teſtimony of the *Pſalmiſt*, may admit the Commentator's Tool. Yet not to hammer it into a new Form, but only to clear away the Rubbiſh; to reſcue it from Miſrepreſentation; and place it in a true Light. *Even as David deſcribeth the Bleſſedneſs of the Man, to whom GOD imputeth Righteouſneſs without Works, ſaying; Bleſſed are They, whoſe Unrighteouſneſs is forgiven, and whoſe Sins are covered: Bleſſed is the Man, to whom the LORD will not impute Sin* *. —Here is *Imputation* aſſerted—The Imputation of *Righteouſneſs* — Of Righteouſneſs *without Works*; without any Reſpect to, or any Co-operation from, any Kind of human Works. It is a Bleſſing vouchſafed to the Ungodly; not founded on a Freedom from Sin, but procuring a Remiſſion of its Guilt.

Some, I know, have attempted to reſolve all the Force of this Paſſage, into an Argument for the *Sameneſs* of Pardon and juſtifying Righteouſneſs. Whereas, the Apoſtle undertakes to prove, not that Pardon and juſtifying Righteouſneſs are identically the ſame; but that Juſtification, in all its Branches, and in its full Extent, is *abſolutely free*. To maintain which Poſition, He argues—" This " Doctrine is as true, as it is comfortable. It " agrees with the Experience, and has received the " Atteſtation of *David*. When he ſpeaks of the " bleſſed

* Rom. iv. 6, 7.

" bleſſed and happy Man, He deſcribes Him, not " as One that has been innocent, but guilty; not " as having any Claim to the divine Favour, on " account of deſerving Performances, or recom- " mending Properties; but as owing all his Ac- " ceptance to that ſovereign Grace, which *forgives* " *Iniquities, and blots out Sin.* Such is the Caſe " with regard to that evangelical Juſtification, which " We preach. *Even as*; it is, in the *Manner* of its " *Vouchſafement*, perfectly ſimilar to the Bleſſedneſs " celebrated by the *Pſalmiſt*."—The Apoſtle's Eye, is not ſo directly upon the Nature of the Privilege, as upon the *Freeneſs* with which it is granted. Nor can Any infer from the Tenour of his Reaſoning, that to be forgiven, is the ſame as to be made Righteous; only that both are Acts of infinitely rich Mercy; deſigned for Sinners; promiſed to Sinners; beſtowed on Sinners. Who have nothing, nothing of their own, either to boaſt, or to plead, or ſo much as to pretend.

In the fifth Chapter, from Verſe the twelfth to the End, the ſacred Penman points out the *Cauſe*, and explains the *Method* of Juſtification, of which this is the Sum—That *CHRIST*, in purſuance of the Covenant of Grace, fulfilled all Righteouſneſs in the Stead of his People—That this Righteouſneſs, being performed for them, is imputed to them—That, by virtue of this gracious Imputation, they are abſolved from Guilt, and intitled to Bliſs; as thoroughly abſolved, and as fully intitled, as if in their own Perſons they had undergone the expiatory Sufferings, and yielded the meritorious Obedience.—Leſt it ſhould ſeem ſtrange, in the Opinion of a *Jew* or a *Gentile*, to hear of being juſtified by the Righteouſ-

neſs of *Another*, the wary Apoſtle urges a parallel Caſe; recorded in the *Jewiſh* Revelation, but ratified by *univerſal* * Experience; namely, Our being condemned for the Unrighteouſneſs of Another.—In this Reſpect, He obſerves, *Adam* was a Type of our LORD; or, *a Figure of HIM that was to come* †. The Relations the ſame, but the Effects happily reverſed. *Adam* the Head of his Poſterity; *CHRIST* the Head of his People. *Adam*'s Sin was imputed to all his natural Deſcendants; *CHRIST*'s Righteouſneſs is imputed to all his ſpiritual Offspring. *Adam*'s Tranſgreſſion brought Death into the World, and all our Woe; *CHRIST*'s Obedience brings Life and all our Happineſs ‡.—The Whole cloſes with this very obvious and no leſs weighty Inference; *Therefore, as by the Offence of One, Judgment came upon all Men to Condemnation; even ſo, by the Righteouſneſs of One, the free Gift came upon all Men unto Juſtification of Life* ‖.

I do not recollect any other Similitude, which the Apoſtle ſo minutely ſifts, and ſo copiouſly unfolds.

* By the Pains and Death which *Infants*, in every Nation, endure. Which are unqueſtionably Puniſhments, and to which they are doomed by the righteous Judgment of GOD.

† Rom. v. 14.

‡ *Quemadmodum Peccatum Adami*, ſays BENGELIUS, *ſine Peccatis quæ poſtea commiſimus, Mortem attulit nobis; ſic Juſtitia CHRISTI, ſine bonis Operibus, quæ deinceps a nobis fiunt, Vitam nobis conciliat.* That is; As the Sin of *Adam*, without any Concurrence of the Sins, which We Ourſelves reſpectively commit, occaſioned our Ruin; ſo the Righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*, abſtracted from all Conſideration of our perſonal Obedience, procures our Recovery.

‖ Rom. v. 18.

He explains it; He applies it; He resumes it; He dwells upon it; and scarcely knows how to desist from it. I am sure, you will not blame me, if I imitate the sacred Author; if I revert to the Subject; and quote another Passage, from the same Paragraph. *Much more shall They, who receive Abundance of Grace and of the Gift of Righteousness, reign in Life by One, JESUS CHRIST* *.

I was once inclined to think, that the inspired Writer specifies, in this Place (what I apprehended to be the two grand Blessings, procured by IMMANUEL) *Remission of Sins*, and *Imputation of Righteousness*. But this Notion, though not without its Patrons †, now appears incorrect and groundless. The Imputation of *CHRIST*'s Righteousness is, not a Part, but the Cause—the whole entire Cause of our Pardon, our Peace, our complete Justification. And this Righteousness, the Apostle declares, is *of Grace*. It is made ours, not on Account of any Deeds or Duties, which We perform; but from the *Abundance of Grace*, which GOD dispenses.—It is called *a Gift* ‡. Every Gift implies something, not originally our own, but another's. This Gift must signify, not what We Ourselves

* Rom. v. 17.

† The great Dr. GOODWIN seems to patronize it—when He says, "Over and above the Man's Absolution, "there is some other Thing to be added, *viz.* The Im- "putation of Righteousness"—when He says again, "Though Pardon and the consequent Imputation of "Righteousness are never to be separated." Vol. III. pag. 340.—Whereas I should rather say, That Pardon of Sin and Acceptance to Life, can never be separated from our REDEEMER's Righteousness. Which is, not the *Consequent* of any, but the *Cause* and Origin of all spiritual Blessings.

‡ Δωρον εστιν αυτη ολοκληρον. Chrysost.

ſelves have acquired, but what was fulfilled by our SURETY; and is, by an Act of heavenly Indulgence, conſigned over to our Enjoyment.—Accordingly, they who are intereſted in this Bleſſing, are ſtyled, not *Workers*, but *Receivers*; not Purchaſers, but *Heirs*, of the Righteouſneſs which is by Faith.

See the diſtinguiſhed Pre-eminence and Richneſs of the Goſpel! *Philoſophy* propoſed many refined Precepts of Righteouſneſs, but could not beſtow a Righteouſneſs upon any Perſon. The *Law* of GOD itſelf, though the perfect Rule of all Righteouſneſs, is weak through the Fleſh, and cannot make the Comers thereunto righteous. Whereas, by the *Goſpel*, We are not only taught the true juſtifying Righteouſneſs, but it is *given* to Us, and put upon Us.—Nay; We have it in *Abundance*; in its moſt conſummate Form, and higheſt Perfection. So that neither Man ſhall be able to wiſh, nor can GOD himſelf require, a greater or a better.—This is a wonderful Saying, but it will appear true, if We conſider another Clauſe from this incomparable Chapter. Suffer me, therefore, to bring forth another Jewel, from this rich Treaſury of the Goſpel. And the rather, as the Jewel, which I am going to produce, was the firſt that beamed Light and Luſtre upon my own Mind. Was the firſt happy Occaſion of guiding my Feet into the Way of Truth. *As by the Diſobedience of One Man, many were made Sinners, ſo by the Obedience of One, ſhall many be made Righteous* *.—The *Diſobedience of One*, is the Diſobedience of *Adam*; his actual Tranſgreſſion of the divine Law. Hereby, *Many were*

* Rom. v. 19.

made Sinners, even before they had done any evil Work. Sinners, in ſuch a Senſe, as to become obnoxious unto Condemnation, and juſtly liable to Death.—All this, I think, is, from the Apoſtle's own Words, indiſputable. If We would preſerve the Propriety of his Antitheſis, or the Force of his Reaſoning, We muſt allow; That the *Obedience of One*, is the Obedience of *CHRIST*; his actual and complete Performance of the whole Law. Hereby, *Many are made Righteous*, even before they have done any good Work. Righteous, in ſuch a Senſe, as to be ſecure from all Condemnation; and, on Principles of Juſtice, entitled to Life eternal.—How clear and eaſy is this Meaning! How regular and exact this Argumentation! What Subtilty of Evaſion muſt be uſed, before You can give a different Turn to the inſtructive Text!

This is the moſt conſiſtent Senſe, in which I can underſtand *Rom.* viii. 5. *That the Righteouſneſs of the Law might be fulfilled in Us, who walk not after the Fleſh, but after the SPIRIT.* That the Righteouſneſs, required by the holy but broken Law, might be thoroughly accompliſhed. Accompliſhed in our Nature, and by our REPRESENTATIVE. So as to be deemed, in point of legal Eſtimation, fulfilled *for* Us and *by* Us *. This, I ſay,

* It is remarked by a judicious Critic, and very *evangelical*, therefore very valuable Expoſitor, that the Propoſition ἐν ſometimes ſignifies *by* or *for*; and is ſo tranſlated, *Matt.* v. 34. *Heb.* i. 1. See Dr. GUISE's Expoſition of the *New Teſtament*.—It is declared by the *Helvetian* Church, expounding this Paſſage, and making her public Confeſſion; "That *CHRIST* is the Per-"fecter of the Law, and *our Fulfilling* of it. Who, as "He took away the Curſe of the Law, when He was "made

ſay, is moſt conſiſtent with the Tenour of St. *Paul*'s Arguing, and with the Import of his Language.—*With the Tenour of his Arguing:* for, He undertakes to demonſtrate the *Impoſſibility* of our Juſtification, by any perſonal Conformity to the Law. Whereas, if We could ſatisfy its Penalty, and obey its Precepts; or, in other Words, fulfil its Righteouſneſs; this Impoſſibility would ceaſe.—*With the Import of his Language:* for, the original Phraſe denotes, not a *ſincere*, but a *complete* Obedience; not what We are enabled to perform, but what the Law has a Right * to demand. Which, every One muſt acknowledge, is not fulfilled in any mere Man, ſince the Fall; but was fulfilled by *JESUS CHRIST*, for our Good, and in our Stead.—This Interpretation preſerves the Sentences diſtinct, and makes a very natural Introduction for the following Clauſe; where the Perſons intereſted in this Privilege, are deſcribed by their Fruits, *who walk not after the Fleſh, but after the SPIRIT.* Implying, that Juſtification and Sanctification are, like the *ever-correſponding* Motion of our Eyes, inſeparable Concomitants; and We vainly pretend to the former, if We continue deſtitute of the latter.

"made a Curſe for Us; ſo doth He communicate to Us, "by Faith, his Fulfilling thereof."

* It may be worth our while to obſerve, that St. *Paul*, when treating on this Subject, uſes three ſeveral Words; each diſtinct, though all derived from the Original. —Δικαιωσις, which expreſſes *Juſtification*; the accounting or declaring a Perſon righteous.—Δικαιοσυνη, which never ſignifies Juſtification, but *Righteouſneſs*; either performed by Us, or imputed to Us.—Δικαιωμα, the Phraſe which occurs in this Place, and denotes the *Right* or *Demand* of the Law; as that, whoſe Accompliſhment is indiſpenſibly neceſſary, in order to the Juſtification of Man.

We have produced poſitive Proofs of our Doctrine.—We have heard an Apoſtle declaring the aſſured Happineſs, and complete Juſtification of *true Believers*.—Let Us now obſerve the ſame ſagacious Judge of Men and Things, diſcovering the Danger of thoſe *Self-juſticiaries*, who reject the RE-DEEMER's Righteouſneſs.

He is filled with the darkeſt Apprehenſions, concerning his Brethren the *Jews*. He is impreſſed with melancholy Preſages, relating to their eternal State *. —What was the Cauſe of this tender Solicitude? Had they caſt off all Religion, and given themſelves over to groſs Immoralities? On the contrary, they were Worſhippers of the true GOD; and had, in their Way, not only a *Regard*, but a *Zeal* for his Honour †.—Wherefore then does this compaſſionate Father in *Iſrael* feel the ſame trembling Uneaſineſs for his Kinſmen according to the Fleſh, as *Eli* felt for the endangered Ark? Himſelf aſſigns the Reaſon. Becauſe, *they being ignorant of GOD's Righteouſneſs, and going about to eſtabliſh their own Righteouſneſs, have not ſubmitted themſelves to the Righteouſneſs of GOD* ‡. Not knowing that immaculate Holineſs, which the perfect Nature, and equally perfect Law of the moſt High GOD, require—being wilfully ignorant of that conſummate Obedience, which an incarnate GOD vouchſafed to perform, for the Juſtification of them, who are without Strength—they eſtabliſhed, or rather they *went about*; they ſedulouſly but fooliſhly endeavoured, *to eſtabliſh* their own Righteouſneſs; to make it, ſcanty and decrepit as it was, the Baſis of all

* Rom. ix. 2. † Rom. x. 2. ‡ Rom. x. 3.

all their Hopes.—Thus were they reſting their everlaſting ALL on a Bottom, not precarious only, but irreparably ruinous. A boundleſs Eternity the Fabric! Yet they built (wonder O Heavens!) on the Foam of the Waters! And (which added Stubbornneſs to their Folly) in avowed Contempt of *the Righteouſneſs which is by Faith*; that ſtrong and ſure Foundation, laid by GOD's own almighty Hand in *Sion*.—For this, the good Apoſtle was afflicted, with "great Heavineſs, and continual Sor-"row." For this, He made the Prophet's pathetic Complaint his own; *Oh! that my Head were Waters, and my Eyes a Fountain of Tears, that I might bewail, Day and Night* *, the incorrigible Perverſeneſs of my People! *For my People have committed two Evils:* in not thankfully ſubmitting to the Righteouſneſs of GOD, *they have forſaken the Fountain of living Waters:* in attempting to eſtabliſh their own Righteouſneſs, *they have hewed themſelves out Ciſterns, broken Ciſterns, that can hold no Water* †.

Having ſhewed *their* fatal Error, He ſtrengthens his Repreſentation, by diſplaying the happy Succeſs of the *Gentiles*—*What ſhall We ſay then?* This, however improbable it may ſeem, We confidently affirm, *That the Gentiles, who followed not after Righteouſneſs*; who had no Knowledge of it, and no Concern about it; even they *have attained to Righteouſneſs* ‡.—Strange Aſſertion! How is this poſ-

ſible!

* Jer. ix. 1. † Jer. ii. 13.

‡ Surely, this muſt ſignify more, than "attaining to "the *Profeſſion* of a Religion, whereby they may be juſ-"tified and ſaved." To this Multitudes attain, who continue, as the Prophet ſpeaks, *ſtout-hearted, and far*

sible. To be sure, the Righteousness, which they attained, could not result from any Thing personal; could not consist in moral Virtues or religious Duties. Instead of practising moral Virtues, or performing religious Duties, they lay immersed in Sensuality, and were abandoned to Idolatry. It must therefore be the evangelical, the imputed Righteousness; *even that which* was wrought by *CHRIST*, and is received *by Faith* *.

Israel, in the mean time, the nominal *Israel*, who, with great Pretensions to Sanctity, and many costly Oblations, *followed after the Law of Righteousness*, *hath not attained to the Law of Righteousness*. Attained! They have done nothing less. They are fallen vastly short of it; they are pronounced guilty by it; they stand condemned before it †.—*Wherefore*

from Righteousness. Who derive no real Benefit from their Profession; but are rendered utterly inexcusable, and liable to more aggravated Condemnation.

* Surely, *the Righteousness which is by Faith*, cannot consist "in humbly *committing* the Soul to *CHRIST*, "in the Way that he hath appointed." According to this Notion, the justifying Righteousness would spring from Ourselves; would be constituted by an Act of our own, and not by the perfect Obedience of our LORD.

I am sorry to see this, and the preceding Interpretation, in the Works of an *Expositor*, whose Learning I admire, whose Piety I reverence, and whose Memory I honour. Yet I must say, on this Occasion, with one of the antient Philosophers; *Amicus Plato, amicus Socrates, sed magis amica Veritas*.

† This, I apprehend, is the Purport of the Apostle's Speech, when He tells Us, that his Countrymen *had not attained unto the Law of Righteousness*. He uses the Figure μειωσις; and means more than He expresses. He means, what St. *Chrysostom* has, in his Exposition, supplied; Παραβατης γαρ νομου, και υπευθυνος γεγονας τη αρα. He expresses Himself somewhat like the dramatic Poet, who says of certain literary Pretenders,

Qui

fore did they so grossly mistake, and so grievously miscarry? Especially, as they were both sincere and assiduous in their Pursuit. *Because*, they forsook the good old Way, in which *Abraham*, *David*, and their pious Ancestors walked. They adopted a new Scheme, and must needs substitute their own, instead of relying on a SAVIOUR's Righteousness. *They sought* for Justification, *not by Faith, but as it were by the Works of the Law* *. A Method, which their Fathers knew not; which their GOD ordained not; and which proved, as it always will prove, not only abortive, but destructive.—At this Stone they stumbled. On this Rock they split. Let their Ruin be a *Way-mark*, and the Apostle's Observation a *Light-house*, to my *Theron*.

Our zealous Writer tries every Expedient. He mingles Hope with Terror. Having pointed out the *Rock*, on which the *Israelites* suffered Shipwreck; He directs Us to the *Haven*, in which Sinners may cast Anchor, and find Safety. He gives Us a fine descriptive View of the *Christian*'s complete Happiness. He opens (if I may continue the Metaphor) a free and ample Port for perishing Souls. Not formed by a Neck of Land, or a Ridge of Mountains, but by a magnificent Chain of spiritual Blessings. All proceeding from, all terminating in,

Qui se primos esse rerum omnium existimant
Nec tamen sunt.

That is, *they are quite the reverse*.—Or like the Prophet in the Close of this Chapter, who assures the Believers in JESUS, *They shall not be ashamed*; that is, they shall be *encouraged*, *emboldened*, and "obtain Honour, and "Glory, and Immortality."

* Rom. ix. 30, 31, 32.

in, that precious Corner-ſtone *JESUS CHRIST*. *Who of GOD is made unto Us Wiſdom, and Righteouſneſs, and Sanctification, and Redemption* *. *Wiſdom*, to enlighten our ignorant Minds. *Righteouſneſs* †, to juſtify our guilty Perſons. *Sanctification* †, to renew our depraved Natures. *Redemption*, to reſcue Us from all Evil; and render Us, both in Body and Soul, perfectly and eternally happy.—Let it be remarked, how carefully our inſpired Writer ſets aſide all *Sufficiency*, as well as all *Merit* in Man. He repreſents the whole of our Salvation, both in its Procurement and Application, as a Work of freeſt Grace. *CHRIST* is, and not We Ourſelves, the Author of this glorious Reſtoration, the Cauſe of this great Felicity. *He is made* all this unto Us—How? Not by our own Reſolution and Strength; but *of GOD*, by the Agency of his mighty Power, and bleſſed SPIRIT. *He* ſhews Us the all-ſufficient Fulneſs of *CHRIST*. *He* brings Us with ardent Longings to *CHRIST*. *He*

* 1 Cor. i. 30.

†† *Righteouſneſs* and *Sanctification*; the former *imputed*, the latter *inherent*. This preſerves a *Diſtinction* between the noble Articles, and aſſigns to each a grand Share in the Oeconomy of Salvation.—To ſay, that if one of the Bleſſings is communicated by way of Imputation, the other ſhould be communicated in the ſame Manner, ſeems to be *cavilling*, rather than *arguing*. Becauſe, the Subjects are of a different Nature; and therefore muſt be diſpenſed in a different Way.—The *Cocoa* Tree is, to the *American*, Food and Clothing, a Habitation and domeſtic Utenſils. But muſt We ſuppoſe it, adminiſtering to *all* theſe Uſes, in *one* and the *ſame* unvaried Method? Becauſe, in one Reſpect it is eaten, in another it is wore, muſt it be thus applied in all? I am apt to think, the illiterate Savage, who enjoys the ſeveral Gifts, need not be taught the Abſurdity of ſuch a Suppoſition.

He implants Us into *CHRIST*, and makes Us Partakers of his Merits.

In the Proceſs of the ſame Epiſtle, the ſacred Penman enumerates the *conſtituent Parts* of that great Salvation, which the SON of GOD has procured for ruined Sinners. *But Ye are waſhed, but ye are ſanctified, but ye are juſtified, in the Name of the LORD JESUS, and by the SPIRIT of our GOD* *. Ye are *waſhed*; waſhed in redeeming Blood, and cleanſed from all the Filthineſs of your Iniquities. Ye are *ſanctified*; renewed in the Propenſity of your Mind, and fitted for a Life of univerſal Holineſs. Ye are *juſtified*; wholly delivered from Wrath, and reſtored to a State of complete Acceptance with the KING of Heaven. All theſe Gifts and Prerogatives, are conferred upon the unworthy Sinner, *in the Name of our LORD JESUS CHRIST*; in Conſideration of his atoning Death and meritorious Righteouſneſs. *By the SPIRIT of our GOD*; through the Efficacy of his Operation, revealing *CHRIST*, and working Faith in the Heart.

Read *Rom.* x. 4. Some Gentlemen have talked of a *new remedial* Law. Whereas, the Apoſtle ſpeaks of the old, the unalterable, the *Moſaic* † Law.—What is the End of this ſacred inviolable Rule? Is fallen Man, or the GOD-Man? If the former, then the Law muſt be an abortive Scheme, and never obtain its proper Accompliſhment. If the latter, then it receives all due Obedience, and is ſatisfied to the very uttermoſt. Therefore, *CHRIST is the End of the Law.*—And wherefore? *For Righteouſneſs*; not that the Law ſhould

* 1 Cor. vi. 11. † *See* Rom. x. 5.

should be setaside, but that a justifying Righteousness might be wrought out. How is this to be done? Not merely by suffering its Penalty, but also by fulfilling its Commands. According to that Saying, *Whoso doeth them shall live*, shall be entitled to eternal Life, *by them*.—Is this Obedience to be performed by Us, or by our SURETY? By our SURETY, no doubt. Since the Apostle is arguing in professed Opposition to all Deeds of our own; and tells Us, that the justifying Righteousness is to be had, not by our Obeying, but by our Believing; it is *to every One that believeth*.

Follow the Course of a River; it will constantly lead You to the Ocean. Trace the Veins of the Body; they invariably unite in the Heart. Mark likewise the Tendency of the Law; it no less constantly and invariably conducts You to CHRIST, as the Center of its Views, and the Consummation of its Demands.—The *moral* Law aims, at discovering our Guilt, and demonstrating our inexpressible Need of a SAVIOUR. The *ceremonial* points Him out, as suffering in our Stead; making Reconciliation for Iniquity; and purging away every Defilement with his Blood.—They *both* direct the wretched Transgressor, to renounce Himself, and fly to the REDEEMER. Who alone has paid that perfect Obedience, and brought in that everlasting Righteousness, which the Sinner wants, and the Law exacts. Who is, therefore, the only proper *Accomplishment* of the one, and the only suitable *Supply* for the other.

What is the grand Design of the whole Scriptures? St. *Paul*, asserting their divine Origin, and displaying the gracious Purposes, which they are intended

intended to ſerve, writes thus: *All Scripture is given by Inſpiration of GOD; and is profitable—for Doctrine*, to declare and eſtabliſh religious Truth—*for Reproof*, to convince of Sin, and to refute Error—*for Correction* *, or Renovation of the Heart, and Reformation of the Life—*for Inſtruction in Righteouſneſs*, in that Righteouſneſs, which could never have been learned from any other Book, and in which alone ſinful Men may appear with Comfort before their GOD †.

We

* 2 Tim. iii. 16. Προς επανορθωσιν.

† "Was there ever ſuch a Comment before?" ſays *Vadius*. "The plain Meaning is, For training up in "Holineſs of Heart and Life." *Vadius* forgets, that this Meaning was included in the Word επανορθωσις. Which ſignifies *Reſtitutio in integrum*. *A Reſtoration to Integrity* of Heart, of Life, of Character.—Beſides; if this was the Meaning, I aſk; Where is the diſtinguiſhing Characteriſtic of the Goſpel? We have not ſo much as a Hint at its grand Peculiarity, *The Righteouſneſs of GOD*, Rom. i. 17. Would the Apoſtle, in deſcribing very explicitly the Purport and Deſign of the Scripture, omit that which is the very Life and Soul of the Whole?

"Was there ever ſuch a Comment before?"—Yes; the Pſalmiſt, long ago, gave Us ſuch a Comment. Speaking on the ſame Subject, and addreſſing Himſelf to the victorious RREDEEMER, He ſays; *Ride on, becauſe of the Word* (על דבר) *of Truth, of Meekneſs, and Righteouſneſs*. Here He opens and particularifes the Nature, End, and Effects of the divine Word. It is the Source of all that *Truth*, which cometh from above, and maketh wiſe unto Salvation. It is the Seed of all that reverential Regard to GOD, and benevolent Concern for Man, which may be expreſſed by one principal Branch of each, *Meekneſs*. It is a Diſcovery of that *Righteouſneſs*, by which alone the Ungodly are juſtified; on which alone Men may depend for Salvation; and which could never have been the Object of their Faith, or even of their Knowledge, if it had not been revealed.

St.

We have ſeen the principal *Scope* of the *Law*, and the leading *Deſign* of the *Scriptures*: let Us add one Enquiry more. What is the chief *Office* of the SPIRIT?—If all theſe coincide, and uniformly terminate in the imputed Righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*; We have a Confirmation of its *Reality* and *Excellence*, great as Man can deſire; I had almoſt ſaid, great as GOD can impart.—What ſays our LORD upon this Point? *When He, the SPIRIT of Truth is come, He ſhall convince* * *the World of*

St. *Paul* himſelf, either gives Us the ſame Comment, or elſe directs Us to make it, when He ſtyles the Chriſtian Doctrine, λογος δικαιοσυνης, Heb. v. 13. Which is ſo called, ſays a maſterly Critic, *Quia nos inſtruit de verâ Juſtitiâ, quæ coram DEO valet, & quæ coram DEO conſiſtimus.* Becauſe it inſtructs Us in that Righteouſneſs, which avails for our Juſtification before GOD; and by Virtue of which, We ſtand unblameable in his Sight.—According to this Interpretation, the Apoſtle conſiders the Revelation, the Diſplay, the Grant of the juſtifying Righteouſneſs, as the very Quinteſſence of Scripture; that which creates its chief Diſtinction; and even conſtitutes its Denomination. Who then can aſſent to *Paldius*, when He would have the very *Quinteſſence* of Scripture, excluded from the *Analyſis* of its Contents.

For my Part, I ſhould ſee but little Excellency in thoſe ſacred Volumes, if the Blood and Righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*, did not make the moſt conſpicuous Figure in their ſeveral Pages. I ſhould fetch a Sigh, and ſay; "Alas! here is nothing, that may recommend me to "GOD. Nothing that can give me Acceptance in his "Sight. Here is the Pole indeed, but the brazen Ser-"pent is gone." For which Reaſon, I cannot perſuade myſelf, to part with or reſign in my Comment, what would be an unſpeakable Loſs to me, if exterminated in Fact.

* *He ſhall convince*, ſeems to be the moſt eligible Tranſlation of ελεγξει. To *reprove of Righteouſneſs*, ſounds harſh. To *convince of Righteouſneſs*, is proper. Beſides; this

*of Sin, of Righteouſneſs, and of Judgment. Of Sin, becauſe they believe not in me: of Righteouſneſs, becauſe I go to my FATHER, and ye ſee me no more: of Judgment, becauſe the Prince of this World is judged**. —Is it poſſible for Words to be more *weighty* and *comprehenſive*? Here is a Summary of Chriſtian Faith, and of Chriſtian Holineſs. Not that *ſuperficial* Holineſs, which is patched up of devotional Forms, and goes no farther than external Performances: but that which is *vital*, and ſprings from the Heart; conſiſts in Power, not in mere Profeſſion; whoſe Praiſe, if not of Men, who are ſmitten with pompous Outſides, is ſure to be of GOD, who diſtinguiſhes the Things which are excellent.

He ſhall convince the World of Sin; of original and actual Sin. The Sin of their Nature, as well as the Sin of their Life; the Sin of their beſt Deeds, no leſs than of their criminal Commiſſions, and blameable Omiſſions. Above all, of their ſinning againſt the ſovereign, the only Remedy, by Unbelief; *becauſe they believe not on me.*—He ſhall convince *of Righteouſneſs*; of the exalted REDEEMER's Righteouſneſs, which the foregoing Conviction muſt render peculiarly welcome. Convince them, that it was wrought out in Behalf of diſobedient and defective Mortals; that it is abſolutely perfect, and ſufficient to juſtify even the moſt Ungodly. Of all which an inconteſtable Proof is given, by his Reſurrection from the Dead, his triumphant Aſcenſion into

Word implies the *ſure Succeſs*, which attends the Operation of the Divine SPIRIT.—Man may *reprove*, and no Conviction enſue. Whereas, that Almighty AGENT not only reproves, but reproves *with Power*; ſo as to determine the Judgment, and ſway the Affections.

* John xvi. 8, 9, 10, 11.

into Heaven, and Seſſion at the Right-hand of his FATHER; *becauſe I go to my FATHER, and ye ſee me no more* *.—He ſhall convince of *Judgment*. Thoſe, who are humbled under a Senſe of Guilt, and juſtified through an imputed Righteouſneſs, ſhall be taught by happy Experience, that *the Prince of this World is condemned* and dethroned in their Hearts: That their Souls, by Virtue of this victorious Faith, are reſcued from the Tyranny of Satan; are delivered from the Bondage of their Corruptions; and reſtored to the Liberty—the glorious Liberty of the Children of GOD.

You wonder, perhaps, that I have not ſtrengthened my Cauſe, by any Quotation from the Epiſtle to the *Galatians*. What I deſign, my dear *Theron*, is not to accumulate, but to ſelect Arguments. However, that I may not diſappoint an Expectation ſo reaſonable, I proceed to lay before You a very nervous Paſſage, from that maſterly Piece of ſacred Controverſy.—Only, let me juſt obſerve, that the Epiſtle was written to Perſons, who had embraced Chriſtianity, and profeſſed an Affiance in *CHRIST*. But would fain have *joined* Circumciſion, would fain have *ſuperadded* their own religious Duties, to the Merits of their SAVIOUR; in order to conſtitute, at leaſt, *ſome* Part of their juſtifying Righteouſneſs. Againſt which Error, the vigilant and indefatigable

* If the Work had been imperfect in any Degree, our REDEEMER, inſtead of taking up his ſtated and final Reſidence in the Regions of Glory, muſt have deſcended again into this inferior World, to complete what was deficient. Therefore, his *Sitting at the Right-hand of GOD*, is a moſt comfortable Evidence, that He has thoroughly performed his Commiſſion; has fully ſatisfied for Sin; and brought in the all-meritorious Righteouſneſs.

indefatigable Aſſertor of *the Truth as it is in JESUS*, remonſtrates—*We who are Jews by Nature, and not Sinners of the Gentiles, knowing that a Man is not juſtified by the Works of the Law, but by the Faith of JESUS CHRIST, even We have believed in JESUS CHRIST; that We might be juſtified by the Faith of CHRIST, and not by the Works of the Law; for, by the Works of the Law ſhall no Fleſh be juſtified* *.

We who are Jews by Nature; are the Deſcendents of *Abraham*, and GOD's peculiar People; have the Tables of his Law, and the Ordinances of his Worſhip: We who, in Point of Priviléges, are greatly ſuperior to the *Gentile* Nations, and have all poſſible Advantages for eſtabliſhing (if ſuch a Thing were practicable) a Righteouſneſs of our own; What have *We* done?—*We have believed in JESUS CHRIST:* We have renounced Ourſelves; diſclaimed whatever is our own; and depended wholly on the Blood and Obedience of the glorious IMMANUEL.—For what End? That by this *Faith in CHRIST*, which receives his Righteouſneſs; pleads his Righteouſneſs; and preſents nothing but his infinitely noble Righteouſneſs before the Throne, *We might be juſtified*.—What Motive has induced Us to this Practice?—A firm

* *Gal.* ii. 15, 16. Obſervable, very obſervable is the Zeal of our Apoſtle, in this determined Stand, againſt the *moſt ſpecious*, and therefore the moſt dangerous Encroachments of Error. To expreſs his ardent Concern for the Truth and Purity of the Goſpel—The *Works of the Law* are mentioned no leſs than three Times, and as often *excluded* from the Affair of Juſtification—*The Faith of CHRIST* likewiſe is thrice inculcated, and as often aſſerted to be the *only* Method of becoming righteous before GOD.

Perſuaſion, that by *the Works of the Law*, by ſincere Obedience, or perſonal Holineſs, *no Man living* has been, and no Man living *can be, juſtified before GOD.*

Are You tired, *Theron?* Have I fatigued your Attention, inſtead of convincing your Judgment?—I will not harbour ſuch a Suſpicion. It is pleaſing to converſe with Thoſe, who have traveled into *foreign* Countries, and ſeen the *Wonders* of Creation. We hearken to their Narratives with Delight. Every new Adventure whets our Curioſity, rather than palls our Appetite. Muſt it not then afford a more ſublime Satisfaction, to be entertained with the Diſcourſes of a Perſon, who had, not indeed ſailed round the World, but made a Journey to the *third Heavens?* Who had been admitted into the *Paradiſe* of GOD, and heard Things of infinite Importance, and unutterable Dignity?—This was the Privilege of that incomparable Man, whoſe Obſervations and Diſcoveries, I have been preſenting to my Friend. And I promiſe myſelf, He will not complain of Wearineſs, if I enrich my Epiſtle with one or two more of thoſe glorious Truths.

GOD hath made HIM to be Sin for Us who knew no Sin; that We might, not be put into a Capacity of acquiring a Righteouſneſs of our own, but *be made the Righteouſneſs of GOD in Him* *. In this Text, the *double* Imputation of our Sin to *CHRIST*, and of *CHRIST*'s Righteouſneſs to Us, is moſt emphatically taught, and moſt charmingly contraſted.—Moſt *emphatically taught*. For, We are ſaid, not barely to be made righteous, but to be made Righteouſneſs

* 2 Cor. v. 21.

teouſneſs itſelf; and not Righteouſneſs only, but (which is the utmoſt that Language can reach) the Righteouſneſs of GOD.—Moſt *charmingly contraſted.* For, One cannot but aſk, In what Manner, *CHRIST* was made Sin? In the very ſame Manner, We are made Righteouſneſs. *CHRIST* knew no *actual* Sin. Yet, upon his mediatorial Interpoſition on our Behalf, He was treated by Divine Juſtice, as a ſinful Perſon. We likewiſe are deſtitute of all *legal* Righteouſneſs. Yet, upon our receiving *CHRIST*, and believing in his Name, We are regarded by the Divine MAJESTY, as righteous Creatures. This therefore cannot, in either Caſe, be *intrinſically*; but muſt be, in both Inſtances, *imputatively*.—Gracious, divinely gracious Exchange *! pregnant with ineſtimable Benefits. The inceſſant Triumph of the *ſtrong*, the ſovereign Conſolation of the *weak* Believer!

Ceaſe your Exultation, cries One, and come down from your Altitudes. The Term uſed in this Verſe denotes, not ſo properly *Sin*, as an *Offering for* Sin. —This is a mere Suppoſal, which I may as reaſonably deny, as Another affirm. Since the Word occurs, much *more frequently* in the former Signification, than in the latter; and ſince, by giving it the latter Signification in the Paſſage before Us, We very much impair, if not totally deſtroy, the Apoſtle's beautiful *Antitheſis*.

* *Ita ſcilicet* mirabili Permutatione *Mala noſtra in ſe recepit, ut Bona ſua nobis largiretur; recepit Miſeriam, ut largiretur Miſericordiam; recepit Maledictionem, ut Benedictionis ſuæ compotes nos faceret; recepit Mortem, ut Vitam conferret; recepit Peccatum, ut Juſtitiam impertiretur.* Thus writes the judicious *Turretin.* To which, in Concurrence with the accurate *Witſius*, I ſubſcribe both with Hand and Heart.

However; not to contend, but to allow the Remark. I borrow my Reply from a brave old *Champion* * for the Truths of the Goſpel: "This Text, "ſays He, invincibly proveth, That We are not "juſtified in GOD's Sight by Righteouſneſs in-"herent in Us, but by the Righteouſneſs of "*CHRIST* imputed to Us through Faith." After which He adds, what I make my Anſwer to the Objection; "That *CHRIST* was made Sin "for Us, becauſe He was a Sacrifice for Sin, We "confeſs: but *therefore* was He a Sacrifice for Sin, "becauſe our Sin was imputed to Him, and pu-"niſhed in Him."—The poor Delinquents under the *Moſaic* Diſpenſation, who brought their Sin-offering to the Altar of the LORD, were directed to lay their Hand on the Head of the devoted Beaſt. Signifying, by this Uſage, a Transferring of Sin from the Offerer to the Sacrifice. Conformably to the Import of this Ceremony, *CHRIST* aſſumed our Demerit. Like a true *piacular* Victim, He ſuffered the Puniſhment, which We had deſerved; and which, without ſuch a Commutation, We muſt have undergone. So that our LORD's being made a Sin-offering for Us, does by no means invalidate, but very much confirm our Doctrine.

It

* See Dr. *Fulk*'s Annotation on the Place, in that valuable Piece of antient Controverſy and Criticiſm, *The Examination of the Rhemiſh Teſtament*. Which, though not altogether ſo elegant and refined in the Language, nor ſo delicate and genteel in the Manner, as might be wiſhed; is nevertheleſs full of *found* Divinity, *weighty* Arguments, and *important* Obſervations.—Would the young Student be taught to diſcover the *very Sinews* of Popery, and be enabled to give an effectual Blow to that Complication of Errors, I ſcarce know a Treatiſe better calculated for the Purpoſe.

It neceſſarily implies the Tranſlation of our Iniquity to his Perſon; and on the Principles of Analogy, muſt infer the Imputation of *his Righteouſneſs* to our Souls.

One Paſſage more permit me to tranſcribe into my Paper; and, at the ſame Time, to wiſh, that it may be written on both our Hearts. Written, not with Ink and Pen; no, nor with the Point of a Diamond; but with the Finger of the living GOD. *Yea, doubtleſs, and I count all Things but Loſs, for the Excellency of the Knowledge of CHRIST JESUS my LORD; for whom I have ſuffered the Loſs of all Things, and do count them but Dung, that I may win CHRIST, and be found in Him; not having mine own Righteouſneſs which is of the Law, but that which is through the Faith of CHRIST, the Righteouſneſs which is of GOD through Faith* *.

This is a Paſſage of ſpecial Eminence, as well as of ſingular Importance. For which Reaſon, You will allow me to be ſomewhat circumſtantial, in examining its Meaning, Force, and Evidence.—The Apoſtle is Here relating his own Experience, and exhibiting Himſelf as a *Pattern* for Chriſtians. He ſhews, what was the preſent Frame, and what the prevailing Exerciſe of his Spirit, with regard to the momentous Affair of Juſtification before GOD.

Juſtification! Says a certain Author; no, "by "referring the Text to Juſtification only, You "miſerably pervert the whole Scope of the Words. "It manifeſtly relates to *Sanctification* † chiefly, if "not to that only."

Then

* Phil. iii. 8, 9.

† As to the Doctrine of *Sanctification*, the Apoſtle,

Then We are directed to find our *Rejoicing*; and to fix our *Confidence* for eternal Life (of theſe Things the Apoſtle is manifeſtly ſpeaking) in Sanctification chiefly, if not in that only; not in what *CHRIST* has done and ſuffered, but in that which We Ourſelves do and poſſeſs. The Papiſts will thank Us for ſuch a Conceſſion. It makes Room for their Notion of Merit. But can never exalt Grace, or exclude Boaſting.

According to his Interpretation, We ſhould all be deſirous to appear, at the great and terrible Day, in the Garments of Sanctification chiefly, if not in thoſe only. But are theſe without Spot and Blemiſh? Will theſe preſent Us *faultleſs* before the Throne of GOD's Glory? Hide me, ye Rocks! Cover me, ye Mountains! Much rather than expoſe me, in ſuch an Array, before the Eye of infinite Purity.

Nay; if this be the Mind of the Apoſtle, then We muſt count all other Things, even the Blood and Righteouſneſs of our incarnate GOD, to be undeſirable as Loſs, and deſpicable as Dung. Dreadful Conſequence! Not to be mentioned without ſhuddering! Yet into ſuch Conſequences We are inevitably led, by this too peremptory and unadviſed Expoſition of the Text.

But We have not ſo learned *CHRIST*. We think, the Apoſtle expreſſes a vehement Deſire, and manifeſts

like a judicious and faithful Diſpenſer of the Myſteries of *CHRIST*, neither neglects it, nor confounds it with the other grand Subject of Religion. He treats of it in the next Verſes, (10, 11, 12, &c.) and conſiders it as a Bleſſing, following after and flowing from, this capital, leading, all-enlivening Privilege—*Juſtification* through the Righteouſneſs of JEHOVAH.

manifeſts a moſt attentive Care, that He may remain eſtabliſhed on the true juſtifying Righteouſneſs. A Point, He well knew, of inexpreſſible Moment. In which Mankind are unaccountably prone to miſtake. Nay, *Paul* himſelf had ſtumbled at this Stumbling-ſtone; imagining that Righteouſneſs to be unto Life, which was producive of nothing but Condemnation and Death. He therefore ſpeaks with Earneſtneſs; He acts with Circumſpection; as a Perſon who had been once caught in the Snare, but is reſolved not to be entangled again.

Perhaps, You will ſay; I do not wonder to hear Him repudiate his old, *phariſaical*, ſpurious Righteouſneſs. But does He give the Bill of Divorce to his new, his *Chriſtian*, his real Righteouſneſs? That which proceeded from Grace ſhed abroad in his Heart; and produced thoſe heavenly Tempers and holy Works, which were both pleaſing to GOD, and honourable to Religion?

I anſwer; He had *no other* Righteouſneſs to renounce for the Sake of *CHRIST*; ſince, as You juſtly obſerve, his former Phariſaical Strictneſs was ſpurious, not real Godlineſs. This He had long ago learned to call by another Name; looking upon it, as ſo much ſpecious Sinfulneſs, or as a ſplendid Abomination. By *his own Righteouſneſs*, therefore, He muſt mean, whatever He poſſeſſed or performed, in Conformity to the Law as a Rule of Life, and through the Influence of Grace as a Principle of Life. Againſt all this, whether it conſiſted of good Deeds or devout Qualities, He enters his Proteſtation. Enters it, in thoſe ſtrong Words, *not having* mine own Righteouſneſs. Not having it

even once in my Thoughts; not caſting ſo much as a ſingle Glance towards it; but being juſt as if I had never yielded any Obedience at all.

And great Reaſon there was, for uſing all this Jealouſy. Since nothing is more natural to Us, in all Eſtates, than *Self-confidence*. While We are deſtitute of Grace, We are almoſt ſure to truſt in outward Duties, and what is called a moral Righteouſneſs. When We are renewed by Grace, alas! how prone are We to doat upon the Beauties of our Sanctification; and not look with the *Oculo irretorto*, ſingly and ſolely to *CHRIST*, as our juſtifying Righteouſneſs!

In determined Oppoſition to ſuch very pernicious Errors, the Apoſtle ſpeaks to this Effect—"The "Privilege of being a *Hebrew* by Birth; the Pre- "rogative of being a *Phariſee* by Profeſſion; to- "gether with a Behaviour exemplary, and a Re- "putation unblameable in the Sight of Men; all "theſe, which were once my Plea for Heaven, and "therefore reckoned my higheſt Gain; as ſoon as "I became acquainted with the glorious Perfections "of *CHRIST*, *I counted* * *Loſs for Him*.—And "now, though I have been a *Diſciple* many Years; "have walked in all holy Converſation and God- "lineſs; have endured, for my Divine MA- "TER's Name, Tribulations above meaſure; "have laboured more abundantly and more ſuc- "ceſsfully than all the Apoſtles; yet, even *theſe* "and *all other* Attainments, of what Kind or of "what Date ſoever, I *count* † but Loſs, for the "tranſcen-

* Ἡγημαι, *I counted*; this is ſpoken of the Time paſt.

† Ἡγουμαι, relates to the preſent Time, and comprehends preſent Attainments, *I do count*.—Not ſome, or the greateſt

" tranſcendent Excellency of *CHRIST JESUS*
" my LORD.—*Yea doubtleſs* *; it is my delibe-
" rate and ſtedfaſt Reſolution; what I have moſt
" ſeriouſly adopted, and do publicly avow; that,
" ſpecious as all human Righteouſneſs may ſeem,
" and valuable as it may be in other Reſpects; I
" both do, and ever ſhall, treat it with Diſdain;
" yea, trample it under my Feet, that I may *win*
" *CHRIST* †, and triumph in the exalted *JE-*
" *SUS*. Human Righteouſneſs fades into No-
" thing; it dwindles into *leſs than nothing*; if ſet
in

Part, but *all Things*.—What? Is a Courſe of Sobriety, and the Exerciſe of Morality, to be reckoned as Dung? *All Things*, ſays the Apoſtle—What? Is our moſt elevated Devotion, and enlarged Obedience, to be degraded at this monſtrous Rate? *All Things*, ſays the Apoſtle.—This is his invariable Reply. Upon all Things whatever, beſides *CHRIST* and his ineffable Righteouſneſs, He holds the Door, when the great Cauſe of Juſtification is under Debate. And We may venture to affirm, That *He had the Mind of CHRIST*.

* Perhaps αλλα μενουνϛ may be tranſlated, *but truly*. As if He had ſaid, " But why ſhould I mention any more " Particulars? *In Truth*, I count *all* Things, *&c.*"

† Δια Χριϛον—δια το υπερεχον—ινα Χριϛον κερδηϛω—plainly imply this *comparative* or *relative* Senſe. Virtues, which are the Fruits of the SPIRIT, and Labours, which are a Bleſſing to Mankind, no ſober Perſon will reckon *abſolutely* or in *all* Reſpects deſpicable; but only in a limited and qualified Acceptation. Deſpicable, not in themſelves, but as compared with the divinely perfect Righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*, or as referred to the infinitely important Article of Juſtification.

That *Aſpaſio* ſpeaks the Senſe of our Church, will appear from this ſhort but very pertinent Extract:—" The " Apoſtle St. *Paul* ſaith, He doth glory, in what? In " the Contempt of his own Righteouſneſs; and that He " looketh for the Righteouſneſs of GOD by Faith."
Homily of Salvation, Part II.

" in Competition with his matchleſs Obedience.
" And ſhould it ſuperſede my Application to his
" Merits, or weaken my Reliance on his Media-
" tion, it would *then* be, not contemptible only,
" but injurious—to be avoided, with Sollicitude,
" as the greateſt *Loſs*; to be rejected, with Ab-
" horrence, as the vileſt *Dung* *."

You will aſk, If He rejects all his own Righte-ouſneſs, on *what* are his Hopes fixed?—On a Foundation, *extenſive* as the Obedience of the REDEEMER's Life and Death, *unſhaken* as the Dignity of his eternal Power and GODHEAD. They are fixed on *the Righteouſneſs which is of GOD*; the Righteouſneſs which GOD the FATHER, in unſearchable Wiſdom, provided; and which GOD the SON, in unutterable Goodneſs, wrought.—Do You enquire, *How* He came to be inveſted with this Righteouſneſs? The Anſwer is ready and ſatisfactory. It was by the Application of the Divine SPIRIT, and the Inſtrumentality of *Faith*.—Leſt Any ſhould imagine, That this Faith might be ſubſtituted, inſtead of his own Obedience to the Law; He puts an apparent Difference between

* Ζημια, Σκυβαλα. How emphatical are the Words! How bold are the Images! And may We not obſerve a fine Advance in the Senſe? *Loſs*, which is detrimental to our Intereſts, and not ſuſtained without Regret. *Dung*, which is loathſome to our Senſes, and caſt away with Abhorrence.

Has the *Apoſtle* pronounced all this concerning human Righteouſneſs, when it would preſume to be a Rival or a Partner with *CHRIST*? Then None can juſtly cenſure what *Aſpaſio* has ſaid upon the ſame Subject. Since his Sentiments, compared with the inſpired Writer's, are but as the faint Breath of an *Engliſh* Orchard, compared with the potent Fragrance of an Orangery in *Seville*.

between the Righteouſneſs which juſtifies, and the Faith by which it is received: not the Righteouſneſs which *conſiſts in*, but is THROUGH *the Faith of* CHRIST.—To ſhew the great Importance of this Diſtinction; how earneſtly He inſiſted upon it, as a Preacher; how much it tended to his Conſolation, as a *Chriſtian*; He repeats the Sentiment, He reinculcates the Doctrine, *The Righteouſneſs which is of* GOD BY *Faith*.

Will *You* now, *Theron*, or ſhall *I*, poor unprofitable Creatures, preſume to rely on any Performances or any Accompliſhments of our own? When that diſtinguiſhed Saint—a perfect Prodigy of Gifts, of Graces, and of Zeal—indefatigable in Labours, unconquerable by Afflictions, and of whoſe Uſefulneſs there is neither Meaſure nor End—When *He* denies Himſelf in every View; depreciates all; diſavows all *; and makes mention of nothing, but the incomparable Righteouſneſs of his *obedient*, *dying*, *interceding* SAVIOUR.

What ſhall I ſay more? Shall I attempt to play the Rhetorician, and borrow the inſinuating Arts of Perſuaſion? This, after all the *cogent Teſtimonies* produced, and all the *great Authorities* urged, would be a needleſs Parade. When our Pen is a Sunbeam, there is but little Occaſion to dip it in Oil.

Inſtead of ſuch an Attempt, give me leave to make a frank and honeſt Confeſſion. I would conceal nothing from my Friend. He ſhould have a Saſh to my Breaſt; throw it up at his Pleaſure; and ſee all that

* Thus argues St. *Chryſoſtom*, commenting on the Paſſage; Ει ο δικαιοσυνην ειχων, δια το μηδεν ειναι, φησι ταυτην την δικαιοσυνην ειδεναι, οι μη ειχοντες πως η πολλω μαλλον οφειλουσι προσεχειν αυτη.

that paſſes within.—Though I never had any Temptation to that pernicious Set of Errors, which paſſes under the Character of *Socinianiſm*; yet I had many Searchings of Heart, and much ſolicitous Enquiry, How far We are indebted to *CHRIST's active* Righteouſneſs. Thoroughly perſuaded, that *Other Foundation can no Man lay, ſave that which is laid, even JESUS CHRIST* *; and that *there is no other Name given under Heaven, whereby Men can be ſaved* †; yet, whether We were not to confine our believing Regards to a *dying* SAVIOUR, was Matter of conſiderable Doubt.—At firſt, I was inclined to acquieſce in the Affirmative. After long Conſideration and many Prayers, my Faith fixed upon the *Whole* of *CHRIST*'s mediatorial Undertaking. Which began in his ſpontaneous Submiſſion to the Law; was carried on through all his meritorious Life; and iſſued in his atoning Death.—This is now the Baſis of my Confidence, and the Bulwark of my Happineſs. Hither I fly; here I reſt; as the Dove, after her weariſome and fruitleſs Rovings, returned to *Noah*, and reſted in the Ark.

This Scheme firſt recommended itſelf to my *Affections*; as making the moſt ample Proviſion, for the Security and Repoſe of a guilty Conſcience. Which, when alarmed by the Accuſations of Sin, is very apprehenſive of its Condition; and will not be comforted, till every Scruple is ſatisfied, and all the Obſtructions to its Peace are removed. Thus I reaſoned with myſelf — "Though there is, undoubtedly, "ſomething to be ſaid for the other Side of the Queſ-"tion; yet, this is evidently the ſafeſt Method. "And, in an Affair of infinite Conſequence, who "would

* 1 Cor. iii. 11. † Acts iv. 12.

" would not prefer the ſafeſt and ſureſt Expedient?
" —Should the Righteouſneſs of *JESUS CHRIST*
" be *indiſpenſably* requiſite, as a Wedding-garment;
" what will *they* do, when the great immortal
" KING appears, who have refuſed to accept it?
" Whereas, ſhould it not prove *ſo abſolutely* neceſ-
" ſary, yet ſuch a Dependence can never obſtruct
" our Salvation. It can never be charged upon Us,
" as an Article of Contumacy or Perverſeneſs, that
" We thought *too meanly* of our own, *too magnifi-*
" *cently* of our LORD's Obedience. So that let
" the Die turn either Way, We are expoſed to no
" Hazard.—This Scheme takes in all, that the
" other Syſtems comprehend, and abundantly more.
" In this I find no Defect, no Flaw, no Shadow of
" Inſufficiency. It is ſomewhat like the *perfect Cube*;
" which, where-ever it may be thrown, or however
" it may fall, is ſure to ſettle upon its Baſe.—Sup-
" poſing, therefore, the important Beam ſhould
" hang in Equilibrio, with reſpect to Argument;
" theſe Circumſtances, caſt into the Scale, may
" very juſtly be allowed to turn the Balance."

Upon a more attentive Examination of the Subject, I perceived—That this is the Doctrine of our *national* Church; has received the Atteſtation of our ableſt Divines; and has been, in all Ages, the Conſolation of the moſt eminent Saints:—That it is the genuine Senſe of Scripture; and not ſome inferior or ſubordinate Point, incidentally touched upon by the inſpired Writers, but the *Sum* and *Subſtance* * of

* This Doctrine runs through St. *Paul*'s Writings, like a golden *Warp*. While Privileges, Bleſſings, and evangelical Duties, are like a *Woof*; a Woof (if I may allude to the Ornaments of the Sanctuary) of Blue, of Purple, of

of their heavenly Meſſage; that which conſtitutes the Vitals of their Syſtem, and is the very Soul of their Religion. On which Account the whole Goſpel is denominated from it, and ſtyled *The Miniſtration of Righteouſneſs*:—I was farther convinced, That this Way of Salvation magnifies, beyond Compare, the divine Law; is no leſs honourable to all the divine Attributes; and exhibits the ever Bleſſed MEDIATOR in the moſt illuſtrious and the moſt delightful View.

All theſe Conſiderations, under the Influence of the eternal SPIRIT, have determined my *Judgment*, and eſtabliſhed my *Faith*. So that I truſt, neither the Subtilties of Wit, nor the Sneers of Ridicule, nor any other Artifice, ſhall ever be able to ſeparate me from the Grace and Righteouſneſs which are in *JESUS CHRIST*.—By his Death, I am diſcharged from Guilt—by his Obedience, I am conſtituted righteous—by his complete Satisfaction, I am completely juſtified, and ſhall be eternally ſaved.—In each of theſe Reſpects, HE is my ALL.

Let me, by Way of Concluſion, review that awful Subject, which introduced the Letter. Let me ſuppoſe the JUDGE, who *is at the Door*, actually come: the great and terrible Day, which is

of Scarlet, and indeed of every pleaſant Colour. *The Righteouſneſs of GOD*, Rom. i. 17. 2 Cor. v. 21.—*The Righteouſneſs from GOD*, Phil. iii. 10.—*Righteouſneſs by Faith*, Rom. iii. 22.—*Righteouſneſs of Faith*, Rom. iv. 11. x. 6.—*Righteouſneſs without the Law*, Rom. iii. 21.—*Righteouſneſs without Works*, Rom. iv. 6.—*Righteouſneſs in the Blood of CHRIST*, Rom. v. 9.—*Righteouſneſs by the Obedience of CHRIST*, Rom. v. 19.—*Righteouſneſs not our own*, Phil. iii. 9.—*Righteouſneſs imputed by GOD*, Rom. iv. 6, 10, 22.

is haſting forward *, really commenced.—Hark! The Trumpet ſounds the univerſal Summons. The Living are ſtruck with a death-like Aſtoniſhment; the Dead ſtart from their ſilent Abodes.—See! The whole Earth takes Fire; the Sun is turned into Darkneſs; and the Stars fall from the Firmament.—Behold! The ANCIENT OF DAYS is revealed from Heaven. *His Garment is white as Snow, and the Hair of his Head like the pure Wool. His Throne is like the fiery Flame, and his Wheels are as burning Fire. Thouſand thouſands miniſter unto Him, and ten thouſand Times ten thouſand ſtand before Him. The Judgment is ſet, and the Books are opened* †.

Obſerve thoſe exemplary *Chriſtians*, whoſe Sentiments I have been collecting. *They* renounce themſelves, and rely on their Glorious SURETY. Methinks, I hear them ſay, Each as they quit their Beds of Duſt; *I will go forth* from the Grave *in thy Strength*, O Bleſſed *JESUS*; *and*, at the deciſive Tribunal,

* The ſacred Writers, I obſerve, often remind their Readers of this grand Event; often diſplay this *delightful, dreadful* Scene.—Their Manner of Speaking ſhews, that they themſelves lived under the habitual and joyful Expectation of it: as Perſons, who were *looking for, and haſting to, the Coming of the Day of GOD.*—They repreſent it, not only as *ſure*, but *near*; yea, very near, and upon the Point to take place. *The LORD is at Hand. The JUDGE is at the Door. Yet a little while, and HE that ſhall come, will come and will not tarry.*—The laſt Paſſage is the moſt ſpirited and emphatical of them all; but has loſt much of its Emphaſis, by the *Engliſh* Verſion. It is in the Original μικρον οσον οσον A beautiful *Eleonaſm*; by which the *Septuagint*, though too often inaccurate in tranſlating the *prophetic* Text, have very happily expreſſed *Iſaiah's* מְעַט רְגַע Which may, I think, be rendered in our Language, *yet a very, very little while.* Heb. x. 37. Iſai. xxvi. 20.

† Dan. vii. 9, 10.

Tribunal, *will make mention of thy Righteouſneſs only.* —At the ſame Time, will You, *Theron*, or ſhall I —before the innumerable Multitude of anxious Sinners, and adoring Seraphs—ſtand forth and declare?—"Let thoſe puſillanimous Creatures fly for "Refuge to their SAVIOUR's Righteouſneſs. "We will confide in Works, in Accompliſhments "of our own. We are the Men, who have *perſonally* kept the divine Law, and want no *ſuppoſititious* Obedience from Another. Let the "Eye that glances through Immenſity, and pene-"trates the Receſſes of the Heart; let that holy "and omniſcient Eye, examine our Temper, and "ſift our Conduct. We are bold to riſk our Souls, "and all their immortal Intereſts, on the Iſſue of "ſuch a Scrutiny."

Perhaps, Your Mind is impreſſed with this *ſolemn Scene*, and your Thoughts recoil at ſuch *daring Preſumption*. If ſo, it will be proper for me to withdraw, and leave You to your own Meditations. At ſuch Moments, to obtrude on Your Company, would render me the troubleſome and officious, rather than

Your reſpectful and affectionate,

ASPASIO.

The END of the SECOND VOLUME.